EAST BAY EXPRESS

JULY 22-28, 2009 EASTBAYEXPRESS.COM

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THE BIRTH OF THE **CERRITO** LED TO THE DEATH OF THE **PARKWAY**. NOW, A LAWSUIT MAY BE THE ONLY WAY OUT. BY NATE SELTENRICH

CULTURE 13

(RE)MAKING HISTORY

A group of Oakland teens gets to remix its own version of local history, courtesy of SFMOMA.

NEWS 7

BERKELEY HEIGHT PLAN TO BALLOT

In the fight over density in the city's downtown opponents are taking their arguments to the people

The Berkeley City Council has cleared the way for developers to build more, taller buildings in the center of the city. But some traditional opponents of big development, who helped draft an earlier version of the downtown plan, are gearing up to derail the council's decision, gathering signatures to put a referendum on the 2010 ballot. *Story inside*

MUSIC 40

SEXUAL SHAMAN OF THE DUDES

Har Mar Superstar brings his potent R&B antics to Lebowski Fest.

Oakland Housing Authority

935 Union Street • Oakland CA • 94607 • Phone (510) 587-5111 • Fax (510) 451 3254

Announcement

Oakland Public Housing Taking Pre-Applications for Lottery for placement on Site-Based Wait Lists

The Oakland Housing Authority is accepting pre-applications for the lottery for placement on the public housing site-based wait lists. Any family that wishes to reside in an Oakland Public Housing development must apply for admission to the public housing program by submitting a pre-application for the lottery. This is a fully web-based pre-application process; no paper pre-applications will be accepted. Once the date for submission closes, a random lottery will be held of all pre-applications to establish each site based wait list. All applicants are subject to all regulations and policies governing Oakland Housing Authority subsidized housing.

Requirements:

Income requirements: Total household income must not exceed the following:

FY 2008 Income Limit Category						
	One Person	Two Person	Three Person	Four Person	Five Person	Six Person
20%	9,810	12,507	15,154	17,852	18,985	22,153
30%	18,750	21,450	*24,100	26,800	28,950	31,100
40%	22,325	26,777	31,267	35,720	36,275	42,971
50%	31,250	35,700	40,200	44,550	48,200	51,800
80%	49,350	53,000	59,600	66,250	71,550	76,850

How to apply? Pre-Applications will be accepted online **ONLY** beginning **Monday, July 27, 2008 at 12:01 a.m. to Friday, July 31, 2008 at 11:59 p.m.**

1. Complete the pre-application online at www.oakha.org
2. Submit a completed pre-application by the Friday July 31 2008 deadline
3. Print or save the online confirmation page

Pre-Applications will be selected to the wait list by lottery: that is not a first come, first served process.

Site-Based Wait Lists. Applicants can submit a pre-application to one or more of the following sites online. A lottery will be conducted for each of the site based waiting lists established. A map is available online.

• Oakland Towers (Seniors only, 62 years of age or over)	• Palo Vista (Seniors only 62 years of age or over)	• Scattered Site 11 - Located in East Oakland area (Int'l Blvd. to MacArthur Blvd./ 38th Ave. & 39th Ave)
• Adel Court (Seniors only, 62 years of age or over)	• Peralta Villa - Located in West Oakland area	• Scattered Site 12 - Located in North Oakland area (Int'l Blvd to I-880 / 2nd Ave to 23rd Ave)
• Campbell Village - Located in West Oakland area	• Scattered Site 10 - Located in East Oakland area (Oakland 73rd Ave to 105th Ave)	• Scattered Site 13 - Located in West Oakland area (30th St. to 44th St./ San Pablo Ave to Grand Ave)
• Lockwood Gardens - Located in East Oakland area	• Scattered Site 16 - Located in East Oakland area (Int'l Blvd to I-880 / 38th Ave to 39th Ave)	• Scattered Site 14 - Located in North Oakland area (40th Ave to Alcatraz Ave / San Pablo to College Ave)

completing the pre-application at the following locations:

- Oakland Housing Authority West District Office 935 Union Street, Oakland CA 94607 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Oakland Housing Authority East District Office 1327 65th Avenue, Oakland CA 94612 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Oakland Public Library Locations.
An OHA staff person will be on-site to assist applicants at all Oakland Public Library locations during each branch's scheduled business hours.

CONTENTS

NEWS & OPINION

3 **Letters**
4 **Seven Days** Is the recession over?
5 **Eco Watch** EBMUD to re-evaluate dam proposal.
6 **Full Disclosure** Dellums gets loose again.
7 **News** The view from Berkeley
9 **Feature** Picture Pub Pizza. Poof!

ARTS & CULTURE

13 **Culture** (Re)Making History with SFMOMA.
15 **Event & Attraction Listings** Lebowski Fest at Fox Theater
18 **Museum & Gallery Listings** Artificial Nature at Autobody Fine Art.
20 **Theater & Dance Listings**
21 **Theater** Private Lives at Cal Shakes.
23 **Lectures & Literary Listings** Summer Brenner at Pegasus
25 **Body & Soul Listings** Sacred Turtle Qigong at the Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists Hall.
26 **Aquarium Age**

FOOD & DRINK

27 **Dining Review** Adesso
30 **Restaurants & Cafes**
32 **Wineau** Savoring Sauvignon Blanc.
33 **Food & Wine Listings**

MOVIES

34 **Movie Review** San Francisco Jewish Film Fest
34 **Movie Listings**
38 **One-Night Stands**

MUSIC

39 **Rubber Souldiers**
40 **Nor Nur Superstar** At the Fox Theater
42 **CD Reviews** Dinosaur Jr., Wayne Hancock, and Jason Lytle
42 **Local Licks** Jaye Velarde, Pellux, James and Evander, and Mike P
44 **Concerts & Club Listings**
51 **DJ & Dance Listings**

EXTRAS

52 **Savage Love**

On the Cover *Parkway Theater. Photo by Chris Duffey.*

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NEWS & OPINION

EAST BAY EXPRESS
FORECLOSURE AND ITS AFTEREFFECTS

LETTERS

[illegible] Feature 6/24

Slumlords Take Over

I live in deep East Oakland. There were six foreclosures on my once-owner-occupied block alone, and just as many one block over. Most of those foreclosures have now been bought by eager investors. These were all properties in need of major rehabilitation. Not one has been rehabbed. Instead, these outside investors have swooped down like vultures, paying $60,000 for homes once valued at $400,000 and renting them out as quickly as possible to anyone willing to live in them. Our once-proud owner-occupied neighborhood has become a block of slumlord-owned rentals. Not wonderful for the few of us owner occupants who remain.

Joshua Beth, Oakland

Can I Buy One?

I'd like to buy one of these blighted foreclosed houses for back taxes. As someone who has been stuck renting in California for twenty years because of super-high housing prices, I am really disgusted with Oakland allowing banks to blight neighborhoods and still hold ownership. Why isn't a condemnation placed on blighted houses and the houses sold at auction to people that will fix them up? Why are banks allowed to ruin the property value of surrounding properties and ruin Oakland's city budgets? Can't the city see there are too many people who would love a house bought for the price of back taxes, people who will bring new life to neighborhoods. Get with the game, Oakland leaders! There is an opportunity to start collecting full taxes on rehabbed houses with no need for federal programs. Stop giving banks a free ride while they destroy communities. The city could sell blighted houses for $1 to people who promise to live in them and bring them to code. The tax coffers of the city will swell and the neighborhood will be a happier place.

Michael Zack, San Bruno

Down [illegible] 6/17

Thanks for Killing Me?

As a long-time vegetarian and new vegan, I take exception to your article on Novella Carpenter to quote "they are killed humanely at the hands of their loving owner and go on to sustain my life." The author here is trying to gloss over the fact that to kill an animal for human consumption is murder, no matter how you look at it. I think most people who claim to try a vegetarian/vegan diet give up too easily and make the excuse to go back to a carnivore diet. There is a world of good, healthy, life-sustaining food out there where no more animals need ever suffer. It just takes a little more creativity, fortitude, and willingness to say that in this day and age we can truly move forward and live in total harmony with all the creatures on this planet. We as humans do not have dominion over the rest of the animal kingdom.

You may think your form of killing is humane, but do you look closely into the eyes of that beautiful animal as it dies? Does it say, "I had no choice in the matter, but thank you for killing me anyway"?

Maria Pinto, Oakland

[illegible] 6/24

When Blood Isn't PC

It's based on a true story, yes? It's also true that many women (and men) are stoned in Iran every year, yes? And most of this stoning is done on very flimsy evidence, for things we in the West would not consider a crime, correct? Put these three facts together and what you don't get is propaganda. The movie may be more violent than you prefer. Hey, I didn't like the violence in *Saving Private Ryan* either—or dozens of other modern movies. But these kinds of movies are made all the time, and nobody does more than yawn. Except, I guess, when the message isn't "PC" enough. Would it have been acceptable with less bloodshed? Or is your message, let's let sharia be sharia (Feminism be damned.)

Debbie Sims, San Francisco

Corrections

In our July 15 Best of the East Bay issue, we misspelled the name of the sports-card and collectible store Dave's Dugout.

The caption in the photo of the July 15 Eco Watch ("Is Bigger Better When It Comes to Trucking") should have read, "Environmentalists and organized labor want the Port of Oakland to overhaul the local trucking industry."

Letters Policy

Please provide your full name, address, and daytime phone number, although we will only print your name, city, and affiliation. Send submissions to Letters@EastBayExpress.com or Letters, *East Bay Express*, 620 3rd St., Oakland CA 94607. Letters are edited for length and clarity.

Why is the East Bay's coolest festival moving to August?

#10 Producers want to go to Burning Man
#9 Better acoustics in August
#8 More bang for our budget
#7 Labor Day is too far removed from Uptown Unveiled
#6 Our food has a "sell by" date
#5 We wanted our own weekend
#4 More food, more fun
#3 We couldn't wait until September
#2 Bay Bridge closing – again!
#1 You told us to (now you can come)

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IS THE RECESSION OVER?

Signs of a recovery emerge amid dismal jobless figures. Plus, higher education gets gouged and Oakland cops learn to not tempt fate

By Robert Gammon

The nation's economy may finally be on the rebound. The index of leading economic indicators showed that the country experienced three straight months of growth from April through June. The Associated Press reported that seven of the index's ten indicators rose last month, including building permits, stock prices, and manufacturers' new orders for consumer goods. There was even good news on fuel prices, as experts predicted that gasoline would remain under $3 a gallon for the rest of the summer.

There also are indications that the housing crisis — which launched the recession in the first place — may be easing. Bay Area home prices increased in June for the third straight month. *The San Francisco Chronicle* reported that the median home price in the Bay Area jumped 7 percent in June in comparison to May, to $360,000 — although that's still down 29.4 percent from June of last year. In addition, 6,828 homes sold last month in the Bay Area, an increase of 27.8 percent over the last year. A government report last week also showed that new home construction rose in June to its highest level in seven months.

However, the good housing news was tempered by a jump in the number of foreclosure filings in the first half of this year. The *Chron* reported that lenders made 261,611 foreclosure filings in California, up almost 14 percent from the last six months of 2008. And when those foreclosed properties come on the market, they likely will decrease home prices further, spurring even more foreclosures and threatening the recovery.

Moreover, people are still having a tough time finding jobs — an indicator that the recession could drag on. Nationwide, the unemployment rate stood at 9.5 percent in June, and in California, it was 11.6 percent — the sixth highest in the country, the *Chron* reported. In the East Bay, unemployment was 11.1 percent. Moreover, the full effects of unemployment may be just starting to be felt as public agencies across the nation lay off workers because of the economic downturn.

Students Got Gouged, Again

Two institutions that are being hit especially hard are the University of California and California State University systems. Last week, the UC Board of Regents voted to slash the UC system's budget by $813 million. The *Chron* reported that the deep cuts, which include the elimination of college courses, came despite widespread criticism from top university officials, professors, and researchers. UC Berkeley Chancellor Robert Birgeneau warned during a public hearing that cutting so many classes would force students to take an extra half-year of courses just to graduate. And UC Santa Cruz Chancellor George Blumenthal said the cuts would harm the UC system's ability to conduct important research.

The CSU Board of Trustees, meanwhile, is expected to raise student fees by 20 percent this fall to help bridge a $584 million budget gap. The board also is prepared this week to slash enrollment at the ten-campus system by 40,000 students over the next two years, impose employee furloughs, and eliminate classes. If approved, CSU undergrads would have to pay an additional $672 a year in fees, raising the yearly total to $4,827. The 20 percent fee hike would come on top of the 10 percent increase approved in May. In addition, CSU employees would be required to take two unpaid furlough days a month. CSU Chancellor Charles Reed admitted that the cuts in enrollment would ultimately lead to layoffs.

Cops Shoot Unarmed Man

Locally, the Oakland Police Department learned a hard lesson about tempting fate. Last week, department brass called a press conference to boast about a significant drop in the number of officer-involved shootings. The department reported that Oakland cops had only shot two people in 2009, down from eleven officer-involved shootings last year and ten in 2007. It was good news, except that one day after the press conference, two Oakland cops shot a man to death in the city's San Antonio neighborhood.

At first, it looked as if the shooting was justified. Oakland police reported that Parnell Smith, who was thought to have been a rape suspect, had been in a running gun battle with Officers Phong Tran and Scott Hewitt before they shot him. But then it turned out that Smith wasn't a rape suspect after all, although he was wanted on a parole violation. It also was later revealed that Smith had dropped his gun and may not have fired it at all before the cops killed him.

The *Chron* reported that the cops' attorney says the officers shot Smith anyway because he had allegedly brandished a gun at them, along with a cane, and then allegedly reached for his waistband just before they opened fire. It remains to be seen how much this changing story will continue to evolve. And as for the number of officer-involved shootings, Oakland is now on pace to have six this year — and probably no more press conferences on how well the department is doing.

Three-Dot Roundup

The Oakland City Council, meanwhile, delayed an effort to finally select a master developer for the former Oakland Army Base, according to the *Oakland Tribune*. Local developer Phil Tagami is the leading candidate, but the council put off making a decision after Council President Jane Brunner said she needed more information. The *Chron* reported that Oakland's increased parking fees and fines and longer parking meter hours — designed to help the city solve its financial crisis — is causing a citizens' revolt. And San Francisco authorities found the body of a man linked to Oakland's now-defunct Your Black Muslim Bakery. The man went missing not long after journalist Chauncey Bailey was assassinated. ●

Seven Days is culled from our news blog, 92510, which you can find at EastBayExpress.com/Blogs.

ECO WATCH

EBMUD TO RE-EVALUATE DAM PROPOSAL

The agency's board of directors has scheduled a workshop for next month to consider alternatives to ruining a beautiful section of the Mokelumne River

By Robert Gammon

The East Bay Municipal Utility District's plan to build a new dam and destroy a scenic stretch of the Mokelumne River has received widespread condemnation from environmental groups and near universal opposition from residents and public agencies in the Sierra Foothills. And it appears that all the sharp criticism may be having an effect. The water agency has put off its expected approval of the dam proposal until October and has scheduled a workshop for next month to consider possible alternatives.

Doug Linney, president of the East Bay Utility District board of directors, said last week that the board has scheduled the workshop for August 31, and that possible alternatives to the new dam include partnering with Contra Costa Water District in its plan to expand Los Vaqueros Reservoir in eastern Contra Costa County. As Eco Watch has previously reported, the Contra Costa district's proposal to enlarge Los Vaqueros is less damaging to the environment and has generated little controversy (see "EBMUD Has Yet Another Option Besides a New Mokelumne Dam," 6/3/09).

The East Bay MUD board also may discuss a plan to penalize water guzzlers and thereby lessen demand. The Sierra Club and other environmental groups have argued that the agency would not need to build a new dam if it forced its biggest water users to consume less water by levying steep fines (see "Sierra Water Grab," 4/29/09). Other water agencies throughout the arid West that have adopted such pricing plans have been able to lower water use significantly. In fact, East Bay MUD itself implemented such a plan during the drought in the early 1990s and it cut water use substantially, but the agency abandoned the program after enduring fierce criticism from heavy water users in Contra Costa County.

The East Bay MUD board had been expected to approve preliminary plans for the dam proposal at the August 11 meeting as part of an environmental impact report on the agency's water needs over the next thirty years. The new 400-foot dam would be built near the existing Pardee Dam near the Gold Rush town of Jackson and would nearly double the size of the Pardee Reservoir. The enlarged reservoir would submerge a five-mile stretch of the Mokelumne and ruin a section of the river that is popular for fishing, hiking, and kayaking. Not surprisingly, the dam proposal generated huge numbers of comments on the EIR. "I think it's fair to say that we got more of a response on the EIR than we expected," said Linney, explaining why the board decided to hold the workshop and consider alternatives rather than forge ahead with the EIR as is.

Will EBMUD save the Mokelumne River? Robert Gammon

The board's change of plans also coincided with a decision by Sierra Club California to endorse a national Wild and Scenic designation for the Mokelumne. Such a designation, which requires approval by Congress, would prohibit East Bay MUD from building the dam. Both the US Forest Service and the US Bureau of Land Management have said that the Mokelumne is eligible for the designation. Sierra Club California represents the Sierra Club's thirteen chapters in the state. The Sierra Club Bay Chapter had already endorsed the Wild and Scenic designation, as has Friends of the River.

East Bay MUD's decision to conduct the August workshop also has renewed hope among Sierra Foothills residents that the board will ultimately choose not to build the dam. So far nearly every public agency in the region has come out against the proposal. "I'm optimistic that they will listen to the consensus of our community and understand the depth of the opposition," said Katherine Evatt of the Foothill Conservancy, a nonprofit dedicated to protecting the Mokelumne.

Still, despite the change of plans, it's not clear which way the seven-member East Bay MUD board is currently leaning. The only board member to publicly oppose the dam so far is Andy Katz, who represents Albany, Berkeley, El Cerrito, Emeryville, Kensington, and a portion of North Oakland. Dam opponents also hope that Linney, who represents Alameda and San Lorenzo, along with parts of Oakland and San Leandro, will ultimately side with them because of his pro-environment background. But other board members, including John Coleman, who represents Alamo, Blackhawk, Danville, Dublin, and Lafayette, plus portions of Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek, have pushed hard for the dam proposal during the past few months. Currently, the board is scheduled to vote on the final EIR, including the dam proposal, on October 13. However, that date could be pushed back further if the board instructs staff at the August workshop to conduct thorough studies of alternatives to the dam. ■

Got green ideas? Send tips for stories to EcoWatch@EastBayExpress.com.

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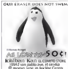
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FULL DISCLOSURE

DELLUMS GETS SUED AGAIN

Another former top city official accuses the mayor and his wife of unethical conduct. Plus, a third lawsuit threatens to turn the whole legal affair on its head.

By Robert Gammon

When former City Administrator **Deborah Edgerly** sued the City of Oakland earlier this month, the scandalous claims she made about Mayor **Ron Dellums** and his wife **Cynthia Dellums**, were met with some skepticism. After all, the mayor had fired Edgerly last year amid charges that she was incompetent and had improperly interfered in a police investigation. Plus, it looked as though Edgerly was looking to score a payout from the city after she had failed to land a job in a small town on the East Coast. But Edgerly's lawsuit, and the allegations in it, may have gained a lot of credibility last week when her former top deputy and good friend, **Cheryl Thompson**, filed her own suit against the city leveling some of the very same charges against the mayor and his wife.

In a lawsuit filed in Alameda County Superior Court, Thompson, a former assistant city administrator, alleges that she, too, was fired last summer in part because she said she refused some highly questionable requests by the Dellums administration. Thompson says that in 2008, the mayor's chief of staff **David Chai** repeatedly asked her to relocate city staff so that Cynthia Dellums could have her own office in City Hall. Cynthia Dellums is an unpaid advisor to the mayor and not an official city employee. Thompson also alleged that Chai repeatedly asked her to help Cynthia Dellums buy furniture and plants for the office she wanted, using taxpayer funds.

In addition, Thompson claims that Chai sought reimbursement last June for the Dellumses' trip to South Africa, which Chai paid for. Thompson said Chai asked for a pay raise and bonus of 5 percent to finance his out-of-pocket expenses for the Dellumses' trip. In each instance, Thompson said she refused the requests and lodged protests with elected city officials.

Paul Rose, spokesman for the mayor's office, said Dellums and Chai declined to comment on Thompson's suit. **Alex Katz**, spokesman for the City Attorney's Office, which defends the city in such litigation, also said his office had no comment and "would respond in court."

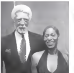
In her suit, Edgerly made the same allegation about Chai asking for a 5 percent salary increase and bonus to pay for the Dellumses' South Africa trip. Edgerly said Chai paid for the excursion with his personal credit card. Edgerly also said that Chai and Cynthia Dellums asked that Edgerly provide office space for Mrs. Dellums and use taxpayer funds to buy five computers and desks for the staff she wanted.

Edgerly, however, also made several eye-popping allegations that Thompson did not. For instance, the former city administrator said that Cynthia Dellums directed her to fire three city employees — then Controller **Bill Noland**, then Employment Services Director **Aliza Gallo**, and city spokeswoman **Karen Boyd**. Edgerly also said that the mayor's wife wanted her to hire two people who worked on Ron Dellums' 2006 mayoral campaign — **Gene Hazzard** and **Gay Plair Cobb**. Edgerly also alleged that Cynthia Dellums wanted the city to pay for her cell phone and for the Dellumses' PG&E bill — presumably because the mayor's wife used her phone in her role as the mayor's advisor and because the Dellumses conduct much of their city work from home.

Although Edgerly and Thompson's close friendship raises questions about whether they coordinated their attacks against the mayor, the fact that two former top city officials are now leveling allegations about unethical conduct likely will make it tougher for him to rebut them. Moreover, the two lawsuits threaten to mired the rest of Dellums' first term in City Hall and hamper his reelection campaign, should he decide to run again. Dellums supporters also will have a difficult time pointing to the many ethical problems of ex-state Senator **Don Perata**, who is seeking to replace Dellums as mayor in 2010, when Dellums himself is now being charged with some of his own.

In addition, Edgerly and Thompson's lawsuits threaten to further fracture Dellums' political coalition of blacks, organized labor, and progressives, because both women are black and both have fought fiercely over the years to protect African American jobs in city government.

In fact, Thompson alleges in her lawsuit that she also was singled out for retaliation because, she said, she has repeatedly resisted efforts to give Latinos preference over blacks in city hiring. Thompson claims that the office of City Attorney **John Russo** facilitated her termination last year because she had publicly disagreed with the city attorney's position on Oakland's Equal Access to Services Ordinance and refused to implement it. Thompson claims that Russo's office and members of the city council, particularly Councilman **Ignacio De La Fuente**, wanted to use the ordinance to give preference to bilingual job applicants — specifically, Latino applicants — for positions in which she said being bilingual was not "a bona fide job requirement." The internal City Hall fight in recent years over the Equal Access ordinance and Edgerly and Thompson's refusal to implement it has furthered exposed the racial tensions in Oakland government between blacks and Latinos and the fight over coveted city jobs.


Ron and Cynthia Dellums

Thompson's allegations against Russo also may make a quick settlement of her claims less likely. In addition to damages, she is demanding that the city award her severance pay that she says Edgerly had promised her before she was fired. Complicating matters further are the allegations that Edgerly also made against the city attorney. Edgerly claims that Russo helped Dellums fire her last year because she had requested that Russo reimburse the city for $4,209 in salary advances that he received. For his part, Russo told the *Oakland Tribune* last year that he would "never ever, ever, ever recommend a penny to settle any lawsuit" filed by Edgerly.

And finally, the whole Edgerly-Thompson-Dellums-Russo affair is further muddied by yet another lawsuit against the city. Last week, **Scott Valladon**, the son of the former Oakland police officers union chief **Bob Valladon**, sued the city, Russo, Edgerly, Thompson, and one of Russo's deputies, **Vicki Laden**, for allegedly releasing his private medical information to the press last summer in violation of the law. The lawsuit raises the uncomfortable possibility that the city will have to defend Edgerly and Thompson in the case — while they are suing the city at the same time — because Scott Valladon sued them in their capacity as city employees. And in yet another twist, Thompson claims in her lawsuit that Russo and Laden sought to retaliate against her in violation of her constitutional rights by falsely blaming her for leaking Scott Valladon's private medical information.

The controversy stems from a July 29, 2008, KGO-TV news story about the attempts of Scott Valladon to graduate from the Oakland police academy and join the force. The story quoted a letter from an Oakland physician who said that the younger Valladon "will not be able to perform essential job functions" because of his history of seizures. The letter apparently was part of Scott Valladon's medical file.

> The internal City Hall fight in recent years over the Equal Access ordinance has further exposed racial tensions.

In a separate letter from around the same time, Laden accused Thompson of being KGO's source, noting that Thompson had been one of just two recipients of an e-mail that Laden had sent questioning Scott Valladon's fitness to be a police officer. City Hall insiders also suspected Thompson or Edgerly, or both, had leaked the information in an attempt to discredit Bob Valladon and the police department because department officials had accused Edgerly of not only interfering in a police investigation involving her nephew, but also of possibly tipping him off about the police bust of a gang of which he allegedly was a member.

It's apparent from Scott Valladon's lawsuit, which he filed on his own behalf, that he doesn't know who leaked his medical file. As for Thompson, she only says that she didn't do it. But regardless of who is responsible, the next twelve months promise to be a very messy time inside City Hall, and another difficult period for Ron Dellums. ●

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THE VIEW FROM BERKELEY

In the fight over density in downtown, both sides are claiming to be "more green" than the other

By Eric Klein

The Berkeley City Council has cleared the way for developers to build more, taller buildings in the center of the city. But some traditional opponents of big development, who helped draft an earlier version of the downtown plan, are gearing up to derail the council's decision, gathering signatures to put a referendum on the 2010 ballot.

Calling themselves "Alliance for a Green and Livable Downtown," the opponents of the plan adopted by the city council last week have roughly one month to gather about 5,500 signatures — 10 percent of the number of votes in Berkeley's 2008 mayor's race. The opponents are starting the process of recruiting volunteers and have a web site — GreenDowntownBerkeley.org. Council members Kriss Worthington and Jesse Arreguín, who voted against the council majority's plan for downtown, have already indicated that they support the referendum.

In their drive to overturn the downtown plan, opponents will be going up against local smart growth and environmental groups as well as Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates. "We hope there is not a referendum, but if there is we'll fight it vigorously," Bates said.

The group supporting the referendum is motivated in part by what is in the plan, but even more so by anger at how the process for creating it unfolded. The first draft of Berkeley's new downtown plan was crafted during two years of meetings and negotiations by a 21-member commission put together by the city council in 2005. The majority of this group agreed on a much denser downtown with a handful of towers, but they also sought to make developers pay extra for the right to build in the city's center. "We had required green infrastructure improvements," explained Patti Dacey, who participated in drafting both versions of the downtown plan, but is a fierce advocate for the original. "New Parks, green storm water, new green roofs, and fees to support it. Transit improvements and pedestrian improvements with fees to support them. ... Really good protection of historic resources and landmarks. Mandatory green building standards way beyond just LEED standards. Zero waste. Aggressive water conservation. Solar Panels."

But developers complained that the strict requirements would have made it too costly to build downtown, and smart-growth advocates warned that Berkeley needed to encourage a denser urban core to help slow suburban sprawl and address global warming. Eventually the more developer-friendly city planning commission significantly revised the plan, and removed most of the original requirements. The head of the revision process, Berkeley Planning Commission Chairman David Stoloff, said the commission created the new downtown plan to be a guide for development instead of a road block.

Under the city's plan, downtown runs along Shattuck Avenue between Dwight Way and Hearst Avenue, west of the UC Berkeley campus and east of Martin Luther King Jr. Way. City Planner Matt Taecker said the original commission thought that Berkeley should have a "mid-rise" downtown consisting of mostly 65-foot- to 85-foot-tall buildings with a few "100- to 120-foot-tall buildings, roughly nine to eleven stories." Those who controlled the revision, on the other hand, preferred more 120- and 180-foot-tall buildings.

But supporters of the original plan were upset about more than just the change in building heights. They were also frustrated that the planning commission had removed the green-building standards and other "public benefit" requirements. In a letter to the council and the mayor, the Sierra Club complained about the changes: "It eliminates any requirements for green building and site design, open space, transit improvements, and affordable housing in exchange for increased density."

Last week, as the four-year-long process was reaching a conclusion and momentum was building for a signature drive to oppose the plan, there was a whirlwind of negotiations to reconcile the two camps. The negotiations resulted in some compromises, including more protections for existing neighborhoods, but Dacey indicated that it was too little too late, or rather too much too quickly, characterizing the last minute talks as "chaotic."

In the final version of the plan approved by the council, the new tall buildings come in three sizes: small, medium, and large. An unlimited number of "small" 65-foot- to 85-foot-tall buildings could be built throughout most of the downtown. The plan also allows for construction of six new mid-rise buildings, four at 120 feet tall and two at 100 feet. Finally, two high rises, 180- to 225-foot-tall structures — probably hotels — can be built in the roughly eight blocks closest to Downtown Berkeley BART.

Under direction from the city council and the mayor, Berkeley planning staff also restored some of the "public benefits" requirements. According to Dan Marks, head of Planning in Berkeley, any new building over 85 feet will have to be constructed using green standards, provide for open space, include affordable housing, and implement strategies to reduce automobile use.

Despite the compromises, opponents of the final plan like Dacey have expressed cynicism and mistrust that developers of tall buildings will be held to such a high standard. To make her point, Dacey reminded the city council that one of the downtown's newer, bigger structures, the Gaia Building, was allowed to exceed height limits by promising "cultural uses" (like a bookstore) that in the end never materialized.

Meanwhile, the 800-million pound gorilla in the room is the University of California, which plans to grow and expand by up to 2.2 million square feet in the next ten years. Some portion of that growth will be "off campus" in the traditional sense, with at least two of its own 120-foot tall buildings expected in downtown under the plan that the city council adopted. UC officials have indicated to the city that they intend to abide by Berkeley's new downtown zoning, but under state law the UC regents don't have to abide by anything City Hall puts in front of them. ●

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Speakeasy Theaters owners Catherine and Kyle Fischer outside the newly reopened Parkway in 1997

PICTURE PUB PIZZA. POOF!

The birth of the Cerrito led to the death of the Parkway. Now, a lawsuit may be the only way out.

By Nate Seltenrich

The marquee read "We Love You Oakland." Tickets were sold out, and a line of moviegoers wrapped well around the block. It was the Parkway Theater's busiest night in recent memory. But the mood was far from sunny. With only a few days' notice, the Parkway was closing, marking the loss of a community institution, the shuttering of a city landmark, the end of an era. Hundreds had gathered to pay their respects.

The theater at 1834 Park Boulevard fell dark the next evening, but its sister facility in El Cerrito remained aglow in blue neon. It had opened along a modest stretch of San Pablo Avenue in late 2006 as an extension of Kyle and Catherine Fischer's beloved Speakeasy Theaters brand. The couple had spent the previous five years working closely with the City of El Cerrito, which invested more than $4 million in restoring the art deco movie house and returning it to full operation in the Parkway's image. With the March 22 closure of the Oakland theater, attention turned to sparing the Cerrito from the same fate. It had been doing good business, consistently filling seats and making money month to month. Yet less than nine weeks later it too shut down.

How it all happened soon became the subject of rumor and speculation. Was Speakeasy Theaters a victim of the recession? Of Netflix and multiplexes? Of a shoddy business plan? A malevolent landlord? Why had the Parkway closed so suddenly, and was the Cerrito's failure related? Each theory had its backers, but the truth wasn't so clear-cut. Behind the scenes, a more insidious game of finger-pointing was developing. While the Parkway sat empty and the Cerrito transitioned to its next stage, there emerged two very different accounts of what went wrong. Thinly veiled accusations of bureaucratic malfeasance and financial incompetence began to soil the once-productive relationship between Speakeasy Theaters and the City of El Cerrito.

While the city quickly turned its theater over to a new operator, Speakeasy CEO and former attorney Kyle Fischer began contemplating a multimillion-dollar lawsuit claiming ownership of the building's extensive improvements and equipment. The city has dismissed his claims and threatened a countersuit for millions in unpaid loan funds and future rent, which it had previously offered to forgive.

As the public eye moves on to the next act at both theaters, one thing looks certain: The birth of the Cerrito contributed to the death of the Parkway, and a protracted legal battle may be the only way out. Its outcome could have immense implications for the future of El Cerrito's newly restored theater and the legacy of Kyle and Catherine Fischer, Oakland homeowners and parents who spent thirteen years building a beloved East Bay business and a matter of months watching it crumble.

Kyle and Catherine Fischer first entered the 1920s-era Parkway Theater in August 1996. It had last shown movies in 1990 and, as a venue for raves and other parties, become a magnet for crime. It sported carpeted walls, decrepit plumbing and electrical systems, and a plywood floor with no seats.

But the then-unmarried business partners — Kyle, a passionate, emotional, shoot-from-the-hip kind of guy and Catherine, a cooler, more diplomatic operator who fancies herself an eternal optimist — had big dreams for the space. They planned to turn it into California's first speakeasy theater, which would combine second-run films and adventurous, community-based programming with food and beverage service for a 21-and-over crowd. In January 1997, the Parkway opened with a showing of *Fargo*, which was already out on videotape, and the Speakeasy mold was cast.

"There's a group of people in the East Bay who aren't being satisfied in the multiplexes," Kyle Fischer told the *Express* at the time. "That's our crowd." And he was right. While the Parkway initially lost money, by the end of its first year it had begun to materialize as both a community linchpin and a destination for a certain class of moviegoer from throughout the Bay Area.

If nothing else, it offered patrons a unique night out. Comfy stuffed chairs and couches with tables in lieu of typical theater seating, pitchers of beer and wine, and a kitchen turning out pizzas, sandwiches, and salads fostered an ambiance that mattered as much as what was playing onscreen. But the theater's bargain-price programming excelled in its own way. In addition to progressive indies, second-run Hollywood flicks, and old classics, the Parkway added B-movie horror and quirky theme nights through charismatic booker Will "the Thrill" Viharo, who often appeared onstage with fellow host and future wife Monica the Tiki Goddess. The Parkway's weekly Baby Brigade broke the mold even further by offering daytime shows where crying children wouldn't become outcasts. And that was just the beginning.

By early 2001, the Parkway Speakeasy was entrenched — and profitable. But a fortuitous occasion would forever alter its trajectory and that of its owners. Ten miles away in the small suburb of El Cerrito, a man named Harry Kiefer decided to sell his building. He'd been using it to store furniture for 35 years, but it was no ordinary warehouse: it was the shell of an old movie palace, a fact few people around town seemed to know. It might've landed on the chopping block if not for the efforts of El Cerrito resident and historic-building buff Dave Weinstein. He alerted city officials to the building's hidden history — including the period details still intact inside — and sparked their interest in restoring the theater.

Small independent movie theaters like the one that city administrators began to envision tend to have a domino effect on the surrounding area. "The theater is a cornerstone of a shopping district," said Allen Michaan, owner of Grand Lake Theater operator Renaissance Rialto. "With it comes increased foot traffic that can revitalize an entire neighborhood." This was precisely what the City of El Cerrito had in mind for the building's nondescript block. All it needed was a knowledgeable developer and future operator to guide the process.

Of the many independent theater operators the city

Continued on page 10

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Picture Pub Pizza Poof!

Continued from page 9

approached in the ensuing months, its top choice was Speakeasy. Both parties agree to this day that the city openly sought to emulate the Parkway's success in Oakland by applying the same blueprint to El Cerrito. The city first contacted Speakeasy in April 2001, shortly after it learned about the theater. The Fischers took a look at the space and thought it could be a great fit, but told city staff they lacked the funds to get it off the ground. Undeterred, El Cerrito reached out to the Fischers again a year later with a better offer: The redevelopment agency would pony up the cash if Speakeasy would oversee the restoration and then operate the theater. Still concerned about the financials but reassured by the city's support, the Fischers decided to give it a try. If the public/private partnership worked, they figured, they could continue to grow their business by bringing the Parkway model to other cities. After the El Cerrito Redevelopment Agency bought the building for $500,000 in June 2002 and issued a call for proposals, the Fischers submitted their vision in writing. They were the only people who did, and won the contract.

From the start, the deal was tinged with controversy. Some El Cerrito residents opposed using public money to buy and develop a movie theater — especially one that would be operated as a profit-generating enterprise by a private business. The unusual deal the city struck with Speakeasy Theaters sits at the heart of the tension between them today: a triple-layered scheme that first loaned Speakeasy Theaters $2.47 million of redevelopment agency money, then funneled $2.88 million of agency funds directly through Speakeasy to outside contractors for additional construction costs, and finally, once development was complete, entered into a complex lease agreement whereby Speakeasy owed $10,000 a month in rent that would be credited toward its 25-year loan.

"It is a complicated transaction," said attorney Karen Tiedemann, who represents El Cerrito's redevelopment agency. "In part it's complicated because there was a lot of work that needed to be done on the building. The agency realized that an operator couldn't afford to do all the work."

While arduous, development of the theater was ultimately a success. Efforts were made to preserve and restore as many of the original elements as possible, including murals of dancing maidens and Greek gods that framed the original screen. An entire second story was built to house another screen while two cafes were added downstairs. The project later received a Design Award for restoration from the California Preservation Society.

Yet by the time the Cerrito opened in November 2005, the renovation had taken a heavy toll on Speakeasy Theaters. The thousands of hours Kyle and Catherine Fischer dedicated to the project meant time away from the Parkway, which they claim contributed to a decline in profits and annual growth — from as high as 15 percent before beginning work on the Cerrito down to 4 percent in 2003. Even more daunting, after starting the project in the black, the Fischers had accrued considerable debt. This was partially related to delays of nearly two years and cost runs from $3 million to more than $5 million. They'd also used their own money to pay for some improvements such as $100,000 on the kitchen.

Speakeasy programmer Will "the Thrill" Viharo with co-host Monica the Tiki Goddess. Photo [illegible]

Furthermore, the Fischers say they were locked into a lease that was too severe. To get the new theater on its feet, they say they asked to not pay rent until the seventh month of operations, just as they had years before at the Parkway. But Kyle believes the redevelopment agency balked because it did not want to appear to the public that it was subsidizing a private business. Still confident that the city had Speakeasy's best interests in mind and would relax the rent requirement after the first year, the couple signed.

They did not pay rent for the first several months, and only by infusing the Parkway's modest profits into the Cerrito were they able to pay it intermittently throughout the first year. Meanwhile, a variety of other unforeseen factors undermined the Cerrito's launch, such as initially being placed in the same exhibition district as downtown Berkeley and thus not being allowed to show any of the same movies at the same time. The beginning of the recession and the ensuing Writers Guild of America strike also hurt, the Fischers said. After finally catching up on twelve months of rent, they stopped making payments altogether.

"In the first year of the Cerrito, we told them, 'This is more rent than we can handle,'" Kyle Fischer said. "They had known we were in financial trouble from day one. We were trying to figure out how to resolve this from pretty much the middle of the first year of operation." The city's response, he claims, was to offer promises of aid that never arrived.

El Cerrito redevelopment manager Lori Trevino, who served as a liaison between the Fischers and the city, sees it a bit differently. She says the Fischers were cavalier about Speakeasy's financial position and frequently assured the city that as soon as they got situated, the theater would recover. She and city manager Scott Hanin also say that redevelopment agency staff asked the Fischers on multiple occasions to submit a formal proposal for a potential lease modification, but never received one. "I don't think we understood the full extent of the problem," Trevino said. "We had no idea what their debts were like."

Speakeasy's financial reports for 2007 — its first full year of operation in both theaters — suggest the Parkway was making nearly $12,000 in profits every month. The Cerrito, however, ran an operating loss of $465,000 for Speakeasy Theaters that year. By factoring in the increasing debt the Fischers were carrying — including $340,000 in accounts payable, $42,000 in bank overdraft, and $5,000 in accrued payroll — the picture grew even grimmer.

In May 2008, Kyle finally sent a letter to Trevino and Hanin admitting that not only couldn't Speakeasy pay its rent, but that after raiding their personal savings accounts, stock holdings, and children's college funds to grow the business at the city's preferred pace — an accelerated all-at-once approach that differed from the Parkway's more organic development — he and Catherine didn't have enough money to pay the $80,000 they still owed to general contractor BBI Construction. The letter did not explicitly request a restructuring of the lease, but suggested it would help.

"It is truly difficult for me to write this letter to you," Kyle began. "Catherine and I take a great deal of pride in our business and our ability to run it profitably. ... In the ten plus years that Speakeasy Theaters has been in operation, we have only experienced one other time that has been as challenging as the present time. We survived this difficult period through ingenuity, creativity, and gall." But now, Kyle continued, he and his wife were backed into a corner and could no longer rely on their autonomy. "We are open to suggestions," his letter concluded. "We are going to keep fighting regardless but we have run out of our personal resources."

Both Speakeasy Theaters and El Cerrito were in a tough spot, but Kyle's announcement set in motion a concerted effort to make things better. In her reply, Trevino offered consolation: "Although we have some limitations, we want to do what we can to support you in this." It was music to the Fischers' ears.

First, the city needed a better picture of

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EL CERRITO WELCOMES
RIALTO CINEMAS
GRAND RE-OPENING
WED JULY 15
HARRY POTTER AND
THE HALF BLOOD PRINCE

After being closed just two months, the Cerrito Theater reopened under new operator Rialto Cinemas.

Speakeasy's position. So the city council ordered a complete financial review. This didn't begin in earnest until August and wasn't complete until the end of September, leaving a span of four months in which the Cerrito continued to lose money while nonetheless improving its business. Trevino blamed the delay on the state of the company's books. "Their recordkeeping was poor," she said. "The accountants that we hired had to reconstruct a lot of it."

The audit found that operations at the Cerrito had improved so much that it lost less than $25,000 in the first nine months of 2008. It would prove profitable by the end of the year, save for the hundreds of thousands of dollars of startup debt it still carried. The Parkway's fortunes, however, had significantly worsened, and it was now losing money monthly — a fact the Fischers attributed to a declining economy, deteriorating relationships with film studios due to late payments, legal struggles and extended lease negotiations with the theater's landlord, and, ironically, business lost to the increasingly popular Cerrito Theater.

The results of the financial review were presented to the city council in October, and in November the Fischers and city staff sat down to hammer out a solution. "Everyone felt good about it," Catherine said. They simply had to present the proposal to the city council and serve notice to the public. Catherine expected an amended lease and additional funds to be approved by February.

But instead of a resolution, the Fischers got a letter from redevelopment agency chairman Bill Jones requesting more information — namely, a new business plan modeled with the proposed relief. The agency appointed a two-person subcommittee to oversee this final step. "The intention of the Agency Board is to continue the relationship, possibly by revisiting the Cerrito Theater Lease Agreement," the letter closed. "We are optimistic that the relationship will be successful for years to come."

Another month put further pressure on Speakeasy, and the company was steadily incurring additional debt by paying its accountant throughout the negotiations. "At this point I was saying every other day to them that we're running out of money from a cash-flow standpoint," Kyle said. With little money available to pay movie studios for films, Speakeasy had begun to enter a death spiral as it continued to await action by the City of El Cerrito.

Meanwhile, the Parkway's situation had gone from bad to irreconcilable. On Friday, March 19, Kyle Fischer released an e-mail blast announcing the Parkway's closure that Sunday. It came with no warning, shocking fans and employees alike. Due to the company's suffocating debt and debilitating battle to save the Cerrito, Speakeasy Theaters had become so cash poor that it couldn't pay the Parkway's new rent of $10,000, nearly doubled in July 2008 when its lease expired.

The landlord, who Kyle says was unwilling to negotiate, had issued an eviction notice. But Kyle misread the date and failed to take immediate action. "That was definitely my mistake," he said. A few weeks later he reread the eviction notice and realized the deadline was nearly upon him. "I expected the sheriff to show up the next day and lock the place down." So he did what he felt he had to: close the theater before someone else could.

By then the El Cerrito City Council had decided not to endorse the modified Cerrito lease and loan terms that city staff and the Fischers had agreed to back in November and began working on a draft of its own. At an April 6 joint meeting of the redevelopment agency and city council, the council finally presented its offer: a package that addressed many aspects of Speakeasy's finances, including rebates for $120,000 in previous lease payments, an additional $50,000 loan, and a laddered approach to future rent payments that began with only $2,000 per month in 2010. It was prepared to present its offer the very next day and sign it into action by May 4, a full year after the process had begun with Kyle's letter.

Tragically, just hours before its long-anticipated rescue was slated to be announced by the city council and posted for public comment, Kyle suggested to Lori Trevino in an email titled "winding up" that the theater had run out of money. "I will be sending out a press release in the next week or so indicating that Speakeasy Theaters will be leaving the Cerrito Theater," he wrote. "We have held out as long as we could."

The Fischers were quickly apprised of the council's decision and timetable. They responded that nevertheless they'd be able to last another few weeks at the most, perhaps just a few days at the least, after which point the business would no longer be able to secure films, food and other necessities. Kyle had decided to offer advance warning of the impending deadline in order to correct his mishandling of the Parkway's closure.

However, the premature announcement backfired.

Continued on page 12

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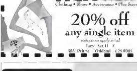

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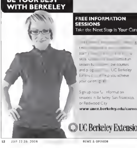

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Continued from page 11

— at a special April 8 meeting the redevelopment agency voted not to offer assistance to a company teetering so near to the edge and evidently intending to close. So it withdrew the loan and lease modifications proposed by the city council just two days prior and opted to begin the process of transitioning to a new operator. According to council documentation, Trevino conveyed to Catherine Fischer via a phone conversation the following afternoon that "the Board has decided not to continue with Speakeasy." Yet evidently unaware of the ramifications of the city's about-face, the Fischers persevered six more weeks by withholding California sales tax in a last-ditch effort to keep the theater open. Nearly three weeks after the date at which the city's aid would've kicked in, Speakeasy was finally forced to withdraw from the Cerrito.

Fault for the Cerrito's failure, and likewise that of the Parkway, does not rest squarely on either party. Speakeasy Theaters may have made poor management decisions and kept inadequate financial records, but city officials coaxed the operators into the relationship and were decidedly unhurried in offering a bailout. The Fischers feel they were led on and left out to dry, while the city claims the couple was uncooperative and disorganized throughout the entire process. Whatever the reason, the same agency that took a year to deliver aid to its struggling partner was able to turn the Cerrito Theater over to an entirely new operator in less than two months.

At midnight on July 15, the Cerrito Theater presented a sold-out screening of *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* to celebrate its reopening under independent operator Rialto Cinemas, which also runs the Elmwood in Berkeley and the Lakeside in Santa Rosa. But the ghost of Speakeasy Theaters still hung in the building. After all, the theater had been designed in its image, and little had changed since it left. Conversing in the lobby shortly after the curtain rose to a round of audience applause, Rialto employees seemed elated to have completed the mad dash toward reopening the theater. They looked forward to serving the people of El Cerrito as a family-friendly, all-ages venue.

Kyle and Catherine Fischer, for their part, are far from ready to move on. They still owe $650,000 to contractors, $250,000 to themselves, and more than $4 million to the City of El Cerrito. It's debt they plan to erase through litigation. Although they've never officially listed the theater as a company asset, they now argue that its millions of dollars of improvements belong to Speakeasy Theaters. The reasons are threefold, the Fischers say: They held the contracts for all work, they purchased the equipment through monetary gifts and an unsecured loan, and they represented to contractors and the public that it belonged to them. The Fischers also claim they are owed for serving as consultants over thousands of hours of theater development. "We're gonna sue them for a lot of stuff if this goes to court," Kyle said. Over the last few weeks he has repeatedly threatened the city with a lawsuit, and as of last week began interviewing attorneys to represent Speakeasy's case.

The city, however, believes the Fischers' claim to the theater and its equipment has no merit, largely based on a one-paragraph clause in the lease titled "Surrender." It states that anything left in the building after thirty days beyond termination of the lease becomes property of the city. The city, which still holds the deed to the building itself, also argues that because it initially paid for everything, whether through a loan or direct payments, it assumes ownership of all improvements.

El Cerrito's threatened counterclaim for unpaid loan and lease monies is disputed as well. While the Fischers signed both documents at the time, a letter drafted by their friend and practicing attorney Brian Topping last month argued that both the loan and the lease cannot be valid at the same time, and therefore Speakeasy Theaters cannot be liable for both debts. "It is all very confusing and hands are not clean," Topping wrote.

The disagreement marks a bitter end to a remarkable project. The Fischers, who invested thirteen years of their lives in Speakeasy Theaters, have lost their livelihood in more ways than one. "When we think about this in real terms, we weep," Kyle said. "This hurts beyond hurt. The Parkway was our child. I can't tell you how much joy we got out of the Parkway." Without a doubt, so did its many followers. One of the theater's greatest coups, Kyle recalls, was being named the "Most Appealing Spot" in Bay Area nightlife by Zagat Surveys in 2002 and 2003.

"I regret ever having gone into the City of El Cerrito," he added. "We were having a great time at the Parkway. I wish I had never heard of the City of El Cerrito." Nevertheless, the theater will long stand as a symbol of what the Fischers' effort, expertise, and unique partnership produced. It has already become a rallying point for El Cerrito residents — a burgeoning community center, a source of civic pride, and an anchor for a growing commercial district that includes a cafe and record shop, a yoga studio, an art studio, and more. The proud "Cerrito" sign out front serves as a standing greeting to travelers along San Pablo Avenue.

"If it wasn't for the Fischers, I don't believe the theater would exist today," said Dave Weinstein, who, after notifying city officials to the theater's presence, became chairman of non-profit citizen advocacy group Friends of the Cerrito Theater. "They deserve a tremendous amount of credit."

Gary Meyer, founder of Landmark Theatres and current operator of the Balboa Theatre in San Francisco, agrees. "The City of El Cerrito, Friends of the Cerrito, and Speakeasy Theaters were visionaries," he said. "It is a beautiful theater. It's a real asset for the East Bay."

The Parkway's façade, meanwhile, has grown considerably less inviting. An accordion-like steel gate extends across the theater's front door. A series of ground-floor windows have been boarded up with what appears to be drywall. Numerous upper-floor windows contain signs reading, "Office for Lease." A single movie poster remains: *Benjamin Button*, out Christmas Day 2008. Yet all is not lost. The two large "PARKWAY" signs atop the building still radiate neon green light. They offer promise that the theater, currently the subject of ongoing negotiations for a new operator, will follow the Cerrito's lead and rise from the direst of circumstances to shine again. ●

Nate.Seltenrich@EastBayExpress.com

(RE)MAKING HISTORY WITH SFMOMA

A group of Oakland teens get to remix their own version of local history, courtesy of SFMOMA

By Kris Vagner

What do a famous artist from Chicago and fifteen high school students from West Oakland have in common? It sounds like the setup for an art world party joke, but the connection is real.

In January, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art commissioned artist Kerry James Marshall to paint a pair of murals in its six-story atrium. In February, the museum commissioned fifteen Oakland teenagers to paint a response mural at Town Park, a community-built skate park within DeFremery Park.

The students attend Oakland High School, Oakland School of the Arts, and Ralph J. Bunche Academy. Some are art students; most are skaters who were already skating at Town Park; some are neither. Museum staffers envisioned the project as a chance for the teens to respond to Kerry Marshall's ideas — he retells American history from the point of view of those African Americans who were anonymous in the textbook versions. The students also were asked to commit to research and painting sessions for thirteen Saturdays. SFMOMA provided supplies, pizza, hamburgers, a $400 stipend, and the opportunity to kick start the students' résumés with a museum-sponsored project.

While SFMOMA didn't want to release Sonny, Devante, Lionel, Harold, Ramón, Alvan, Tamara, Sean, Dalena, Tony, Kimani, Jorge, José, Nile, and Jacob's last names out of concern for their privacy, they did let a reporter tag along behind the scenes to watch the project unfold.

First off, the students met with Marshall and saw his paintings. Marshall had painted the indoor murals "Visible Means of Support: Monticello" and "Visible Means of Support: Mount Vernon," each 32 feet long and a couple flights above viewers' heads, with the help of painters from Precita Eyes, the San Francisco-based mural organization. The paintings show Thomas Jefferson and George Washington standing in front of their respective monuments, their authoritative postures competing with the coloring-book style they're rendered in. Scores of slaves are camouflaged in unfinished dot-to-dot puzzles and paint-by-numbers type backgrounds. The Founding Fathers are grossly elongated. They only start to look normally proportioned if you stand right underneath them.

"I'm interested in what's left out of the stories," Marshall said later at a press conference. "This is just one visual contribution to the way that historical narratives continue to be revised and revealed and perverted." The students were expected to make their own contribution to that canon, to present a view of their world through their own eyes.

To brush up on local history, they met with Steve Lavoie, a librarian at the Oakland Public Library's Oakland History Room. He told them stories about the first transcontinental railroad and how the Black Panthers had met at DeFremery Park in the 1960s. He showed them a photo of a few Black Panther children with serious expressions, dressed in clothes that now look archaically formal. "The themes did not seem to be resonating," SFMOMA Education Associate Aimee Shapiro later recalled. "A lot of the students were lying on the table and acting all bored."

Anna Lawson, SFMOMA's Manager of School, Youth and Family Programs, agreed. "We really thought it was a crash-and-burn moment," she said. "We were like 'This is not working out so well.'"

A montage of the DeFremery Park mural.

Kris Vagner

Event Details

An exhibition about the mural's planning and design process will be on view at SFMOMA's Koret Visitor Education Center (151 Third St., 2nd Fl., San Francisco) until Oct. 18. SFMOMA.org

But when the students started sketching out ideas for the mural, the stories Lavoie had told them were on their front burners. The railroad, the Black Panthers, the fact that parts of Oakland used to be farmland, even the oak trees that had lent the city its name had captured their attention.

Next, the teens visited Emeryville artist Brett Cook, who uses a graffiti style and leads groups of kids and adults in community art projects. Cook gave the students a tour of his studio and brainstormed with them. They were impressed with his ample spray-paint collection, and Cook imparted his theories about how art and everyday life don't necessarily have to be so separate. To him, living your life and being part of a community can involve as much creative expression as making paintings. He explained, "It's not just 'I'm the best colorer in the class.' It's also 'How do we make our life the best it can be?'"

This came as good news to a few of the students, who weren't too confident about their drawing skills. They could start sketching their ideas by finding photos online instead of struggling with a new medium. After a couple weeks of sketching, downloading, talking, and thinking, facilitated by Fred Alvarado, a Fruitvale-based Precita Eyes muralist who'd helped paint Kerry Marshall's pieces, the group came up with a draft of their own mural.

On a Saturday morning in February, the thirteen boys and two girls, most wearing skater sneakers and black T-shirts or hoodies, met in a classroom at SFMOMA. Alvarado was running late. As the students waited for him, they watched YouTube, texted their friends, and snapped pictures with cell phones. The atmosphere was casual and polite. Their time didn't seem precious. Alvarado arrived, baseball cap askance as usual. His tardiness was unusual. (But to us anyway, understandable. He'd been at an *Express*-sponsored party the night before.) He was apologetic. The one joke someone cracked was so mild it seemed intended more to let him off the hook than to razz him.

He unrolled a black-and-white mock-up of the mural and hung it on a magnet board. The train, the oak trees, and the Black Panther children, now dressed like skaters and holding a boom box, were all in there, drawn with the passionate contour lines of a high schooler's sketchbook and the swirly, peace-and-groovy-new-attitude of retro-Partridge-Family graphics. The students had written "chaos" on the trucks and "hope" in the clouds. (The clouds later became a Mexican flag.)

"Now we need to write a paragraph," Alvarado said. The paragraph would describe the mural and guide the rest of the production process. With ear buds still in ears, they wrote with Crayola markers about Oakland's geography and history, about the idea of working as a community.

Continued on page 14

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The Moment Has Come

Could the current world crisis be the tipping point for transformation?

Benjamin Creme is an author, artist and chief editor of *Share International* magazine
Info: (510) 841 3738
www.SharingForPeace.org

People everywhere are awakening to the reality that the old ways of greed and competition no longer work. The times demand an entirely *new* approach.

This is the moment awaited by Maitreya, the World Teacher, for his public emergence, says Benjamin Creme. Maitreya is a colossal cosmic avatar with limitless love and immeasurable wisdom, and at the same time is a friend and brother of humanity.

He and his group of enlightened teachers, the Masters of Wisdom, are returning to the everyday world to help us solve our most critical global problems.

They are here to inspire us to create a new civilization based on sharing and justice, so that all may have the basic necessities of life: food, shelter, health care, and education.

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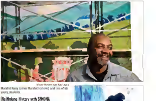
— Gustav Niebuhr, *The New York Times*



Willie Walton [illegible]

Muralist Kerry James Marshall (above) and one of his young students.

(Re)Making History with SFMOMA

Continued from page 13

to overcome violence and chaos and replace them with love and peace.

What kinds of violence and chaos are on their minds? Other than mentioning that it's become hard to choose what color to wear because every color is associated with a gang, no one was saying. Alvarado reported that even though he got to know the students pretty well, there were a lot of topics they didn't discuss outside their own peer group. But in December, a former high school teacher known as K Dub (Keith Williams), who was responsible for getting Town Park built, told community news site East Bay West Online: "From teaching here I know at least six students who are no longer here because of a bullet, and I'm sure none of them warranted it."

In the same conversation, K Dub said: "Everybody seems like they are afraid of these kids instead of talking to them."

Cook had suggested that we might all have something to learn by trying to communicate across the boundaries implied by our own demographics. Marshall has won popular and academic acclaim and awarded a MacArthur genius grant for doing just that. Essentially the mural project was the students' chance to have a go at communicating across those boundaries.

You might expect that with the mike in their hands and a museum going audience to listen, the teens would want to jump up and shout about who they really are or rail against the inequities of a world where their peers could be caught in gunfire. Actually, the mural reads more like a cheery scrapbook collection or a visual time capsule of what the students discovered about their corner of the world. It matches the statements they wrote at the museum about hope being their main priority.

The students transferred their picture to eight foot-high plywood panels, which would be bolted to a concrete wall. Alvarado, a patient, low-key leader, left the decision making and execution to his charges but held them to a professional standard. He interjected with technical advice ("We can't use fluorescents in a mural; they're not lightfast.") and friendly admonishments ("Do it right"; "Don't take shortcuts"; "We problem-solve right here, then it's going to cause less problems later"). He pointed out that the mural will be there in the park representing them for a long time.

"These kids are pretty on point," he said. "They understand it's a pretty special project, not every kid is going to get to work with the museum. They're all motivated people. They're going to come out with a great accomplishment to give to the neighborhood and the skate park."

Shapiro said she was impressed with the teens' passion and commitment. She reported that on several occasions, they voluntarily extended the required four-hour shift to six. Some skipped family events (a wedding; the birth of new cousin) or football games they were scheduled to play in so they could stay and work. Some had forgotten about the $400 stipend they'd receive, and a few parents told Shapiro their kids, who continued to play it relatively cool around their artistic mentors, were full-on excited about the whole thing.

Over the next few Saturdays, the students painted in the park. Strangers dropped by on sunny days to admire their progress, and tweens checked out the mural as they sailed up and down skateboard ramps and jumped their BMX bikes in Town Park.

In mid-May, they finished the painting and titled it "Change, Family, Roots & Culture." Kerry Marshall came back to town to celebrate its unveiling and congratulate the young artists on adding their own visual narrative Oakland's historical record. ●

Feedback@EastBayExpress.com

EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS

Lebowski Fest Jerry Ewald

The Dude Abides

Lebowski Fest brings His Dudeness to the Fox Theater

Will Russell is no stranger to obsession. As a young adult he became infatuated with the alt-rock band the Pixies and wound up tattooing their logo on his forearm. He has also had a long-standing attachment to his hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, where he runs a small shop that features T-shirts by local designers. He's been passionate about Tim Burton's film *Pee Wee's Big Adventure* for decades, having seen it in his "formative years." Yet none of the aforementioned quirks compares to Russell's fixation with the 1998 Coen Brothers' film *The Big Lebowski*, which he's seen too many times to count. "Honestly I've lost track," Russell said. "I'm pretty certain that I'm in the triple digits." Russell knows the film so well at this point that he can recite huge chunks of it by rote. He knows arcane bits of *Big Lebowski* lore — that, for instance, Jeff Bridges' character "the Dude" is based on a real-life member of the Seattle Liberation Front, or that the F-word is used 281 times in the course of the two-hour movie. "It's hard for me to explain how a movie could be that rewatchable, but I like to compare it to a music album," Russell said. "You know what's next but it's just so enjoyable to experience it."

Such sentiments inspired Russell to launch **Lebowski Fest** with his friend Scott Shuffitt, back in 2002. At that time, the movie, which had flopped at the box office but garnered a lot of critical acclaim, was just beginning to generate its cult following. (Russell said it took time for viewers — himself included — to appreciate the full brilliance of the script and the characters.) Lebowski Fest wasn't the first of its kind, considering that *Star Trek* and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* had already produced similarly arcane subcultures. But those predecessors don't compare with Shuffitt and Russell's celebration of all things Lebowski, which consists of a costumed bowling party (during which people run around dressed as Jesus Quintana and German nihilists), themed musical performances, and, of course, a huge film screening.

Mostly, Lebowski Fest is about paying homage to White Russians, Seventies beater cars, Creedence Clearwater Revival, and loveable slackers who say "man" after every sentence. The attendees all bow to the Dude's non-competitive, laid-back ethos — thus, anything near 200 is a pretty amazing score at a Lebowski Fest bowling party. In the seven years since its inception, the fest has expanded to fifteen cities and generated the book *I'm a Lebowski, You're a Lebowski: Life, The Big Lebowski, and What Have You*. Still, the Coen Brothers remain snugly above the fray. Asked by the authors for an official statement, they said: "You have neither our blessing nor our curse." At some level, said Russell, they must get a kick out of the whole thing. Lebowski Fest San Francisco Movie Party happens Saturday, July 25, at the **Fox Theater** (1807 Telegraph Ave., Oakland), 7:30 p.m., $22.50. Har Mar Superstar performs. LebowskiFest.com

— *Rachel Swan*

ATTRACTIONS

[illegible] Artisan Marketplace Featuring handmade jewelry, sculptures, ceramics, paintings, photography, dolls, soaps, clothing, floral arrangements, greeting cards, and more. Info: 510/336-4912. Fridays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Free. Frank Ogawa Plaza, at 14th and Broadway sts., Oakland.

Redwood Valley Railway Twelve-minute scenic journey by steam train through the wilderness of Tilden Regional Park. Info: 510-548-6100. Saturdays, Sundays, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. $2 per ticket, or 5 tickets for $8. Tilden Regional Park, entrances off Wildcat Canyon Rd. and Grizzly Peak Blvd., Berkeley. 510-525-2233.

FAIRS, FESTIVALS & FUND RAISERS

Berkeley Kite Festival With candy drops and mini-kite battles, traction kites from the Soda-line Kite-Flying Society of Hamamatsu, Japan, a giant [illegible] by the [illegible] Kite Wranglers, and the West Coast Kite Championships. July 25-26, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. Cesar Chavez Park, 200 Marina Blvd., Berkeley.

Chinatown Night Market Chef demonstrations, live music, and merchant vendors. Saturdays, 4-8 p.m. Continues through July 25. Free. Oakland Chinatown, 10th St. (at Webster St.), Oakland.

The Indie Bazaar Featuring handpicked local fashion and craft designers. Sat., July 25, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Free. Pretty Penny, 5488 College Ave., Oakland.

Last Sundays Fest With interactive booths, two stages of music, and a kids area. Featured artists include the Free Radio Band, Breaking Custom, [illegible], Robbie Stobbart, Rafael Bustamante Santa, and Amaugh Culture. Starting July 26. Last Sunday of every month, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Continues through Sept. 27. Free. Telegraph Ave. (between Dwight and Bancroft ways), Berkeley.

Peruvian Independence Day Celebration With De Asorge y Kaye. Sat., July 25, 8 p.m. $15-$18. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568, LaPena.org.

[illegible] Hosted by Ed Wilson of the San Francisco Mime Troupe. Thu., July 23, 7:30 p.m. Thu., Aug. 13, 7:30 p.m. $20 includes 10 games and a free drink. Rhythmix Cultural Works, 2513 Blanding Ave., Alameda. 510-865-5060, Rhythmix.org.

KIDS

[illegible] [illegible] and TV host John Stanley will be signing autographs. July 25-26, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. $10-$15. Playland-Not-at-the-Beach, 10979 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, Playland-Not-at-the-Beach.org.

Dog Day Thursday Kids in grades 1-5 read to specially trained Reading Education Assistance Dogs. Thursdays, 3 p.m. Continues through Sept. 3. Free. Albany Library, 1249 Marin Ave., Albany. 510-526-3720, ACLibrary.org.

Family Extravaganza: Strung Things Make paintings, sculptures, and animated objects with string. Sat., July 25, 1-4 p.m. $7 per kid. MOCHA - Museum of Children's Art, 538 9th St., Suite 210, Oakland. 510-465-8770, MOCHA.org.

Kerry's Kids Henry Robinson Onsite physicians are Rob Savio, Ricardo Moreno, and DeWayne Panameno. Fourth Monday of every month, 5:30-7 p.m. Henry Robinson Multiservice Center, 559 16th St., Oakland. 510-419-1100. Please bring your child's yellow immunization card. 510-444-4295.

Kids' Book Group A new reading group for children who love books. Last Sunday of every month, 11 a.m.-noon. Free. Diesel, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965, DieselBookstore.com.

Peter Pan, the Musical Elizabeth McKay directs this Berkeley Playhouse production with musical direction by Phil Gorman. Thursdays-Saturdays, 7 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 p.m.; Sundays, 1 & 6 p.m. Continues through Aug. 23. $12.50-$28. The Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-8542, BerkeleyPlayhouse.org.

[illegible] Kids' Dance Disco-style dance party with jugglers, clowns, healthy eats, and juice boxes for kids. Fri., July 24, 6-8 p.m., $6 for kids ages 2 and up; $17

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The Devil Makes Three, Pnuma Trio
Fort Knox Five (live), Eoto, Crown City Rockers, Goddess Alchemy Project, Albino, Blue Turtle Seduction, Moonalice, Trillion Green, Lynx and Janover, Wisdom, DJ Israel, Mighty Dub Killas (live), Karsh Kale (live), March Fourth Marching Band
Jah Sun and Sadiley Culture, Lafa Taylor, Flowmotion, La Cura, Sambada, Tina Malia, Fanaah Fi Allah Qawali Ensemble, Sasha Rose, Big Gigantic, Underground Orchestra, Garage Girl, Boombox, On The One, Dubli 2 Dublin, Luminaries, 7 Club, Jeff Jones Band, Cyphertown Collective, A Town Infusion, Bison Lyon, Urban Nature, Starin B, Desert Dwellers, Radio Devi, Kirtan with Prema Mayi and Friends, Lila D'Moon, Jacob La Fleur, Ethnic Double, Resident Anti-Hero, Comedy Show Hosted By Wavy Gravy and Special Guests.
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- MC El Kool Kyle
- Rafael Bustamante Samo
- Best Damm Steel Band
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- Positive Knowledge
- Joe Hickey

This summer is an exciting one for Berkeley and Telegraph Avenue with the debut of our Telegraph LastSundaysFest: three all-day Sunday fairs showcasing the best of Berkeley, the East Bay and beyond. Two stages on Telegraph will feature diverse musical, cultural and dance performances. The street will be closed for dining, walking and exploration. There will be fair day specials from our merchants and restaurants. We will feature a children's area, handcraft vendors, outreach exhibits and educational presentations.

In the children's area, Fun & Games Amusements will be providing a children's entertainment area. Down the street, the East Bay Depot for Creative Reuse will be on site making art for children from recycled materials.

Some of the best talent in the East Bay is coming to Telegraph!

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EAST BAY EXPRESS ANNAPURNA lastsundaysfest.com LIVE 105 PLANET BLAKES

PICKS

Aqua Challenge

The pool party will have to wait. On *Saturday, July 25*, the **Lake Del Valle Aqua Challenge** will make the **Swim Beach** (7000 Del Valle Rd., Livermore) no place for Marco Polo games. There will be races of one-half to two miles, and for those wanting to dry off fast, a "duathlon" right after the swim will feature a three-mile running race and celebrate separate winners. The fastest in every ten-year age group will get trophies, while those wanting to go romeo-balling will have to wait. Registration starts at 7 a.m., race at 8:30 a.m., $35-$55. OnYourMarkEvents.com — *Kibby Kleiman*

Berkeley Kite Festival

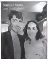
These aren't your childhood's kites. The **Berkeley Kite Festival**, now in its 24th year, elevates kiting to both an art form and a special sport, with hand-painted silk flyers, hundred-foot-long airborne animals, and a number of different styles of kite-fighting. This year's festival boasts an octopus kite the length of a football field — the world's longest — as well as special guests from the Sode-sho kite-flying society of Hamamatsu, Japan. There's also a giant-creature kite expo, team kite-flying shows, and plenty of kid-friendly activities, including kite-making workshops and candy drops. On Saturday and Sunday, July 25 & 26, at the Berkeley Marina's **Cesar Chavez Park** (11 Spinnaker Way, Berkeley), 11-5 p.m., free. HighlineKites.com — *Ellyn Cushing*

Oakland Parks and Recreations 100th Anniversary Festival

The City of Oakland's Office of Parks and Recreation is celebrating its **100th anniversary**, and they're throwing a huge party on Saturday, July 25, at **deFremery Park** (1651 Adeline St., Oakland) to celebrate. With local artists, live music, games, and crafts, the event promises a fun time for all ages. Bring a blanket and picnic, or get food from one of the many food vendors. Watch skateboarding, tennis, and baseball tournaments, or sign up for three-on-three basketball. There will be a city-wide swim meet at 9 a.m. and free access to the public pool. Other attractions include aerial displays, acrobatics, clowning, and face painting presented by Circus Bella and Prescott Clowns. 11 a.m.-6 p.m., free. OaklandNet.com/parks — *Aubrey Ferreira*

Point by Number Closing Reception

WEartspace (718 W. 40th St., Oakland) was created by a wife-and-husband team — painter Tina Dillman and photographer Naaman Rosen — who, after moving into an apartment with a storefront on the northeast corner of 40th and West streets, decided to showcase art and give back to the community that inspires them. WEartspace is their home, literally their living room and kitchen, made available as a venue for the arts. "It's great to be able to share your passion with the world," says Tina Dillman. "And knowing that this a vibrant city for the arts, why not open our doors to the rest of the community, highlighting the work of our neighbors and friends?" Their first group show, *Point by Number*, featuring the work of local artists such as Jake Coolidge, Laura Paisley, Carmella Foote, Mike Isla, Lauren Fike, and Winston Gorris-Gillen, opened with live music and interactive painting. A **closing reception** for *Point by Number*, with acoustic and electronic sounds by bands Tall Grass, Clipd Beaks, and Ned, happens on Sunday, July 26, 5 p.m., free. WEartspace.com — *A.F.*


Naaman Rosen and Tina Dillman

Craig Kanard

E&A

for adults. Rhythmix Cultural Works, 2513 Blanding Ave., Alameda, 510-865-5060, Rhythmix.org.

LGBT

Dress-Up Wednesdays A [illegible] gathering where transgender girls, cross-dressers, and their lovers are [illegible]. Enjoy snacks and a huge selection of clothing for the woman in you. Dress up, make friends, take photos, and get fashion tips. Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., $15-20 donation requested. [illegible] Lois E. [illegible] Blvd., [illegible] Fremont, 510-656-4730, RaveGirl.com.

East Bay FrontRunners Join the GLBT group for non-competitive runs and walks, followed by brunch at a local restaurant. Visit the Web site for weekly locations. Saturdays, 9:00 a.m., free. EastBayFrontRunners.org. Berkeley Marina, 201 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible].

Express 30s Discussion group for gay, bi, or questioning men in their 30's in the East Bay. Thursdays, 8-10 p.m., $5-$10 suggested donation. (510) 548-8283. Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-8283, PacificCenter.org.

EXQB Youth Group Drop-in group for LGBT youth. Tuesdays: arts/crafts/writing/music. Wednesdays: [illegible]. Thursdays: fun topics/guest speakers. Fridays: paper movies/video games. Tuesdays, 4-6 p.m., Wednesdays, 4-6 p.m., Thursdays, 4-6 p.m., Fridays, 4-6 p.m., Free. (510) 548-8283. Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-8283, PacificCenter.org.

Wicked Gorgeous Drag Show Helena Tyvus, Cassandra Cass, Rusty Hips, and their friends. Fridays, 9 p.m. Continues through Sept. 4, $5. White Horse Inn, 6551 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-652-3820, WhiteHorseBar.com.

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SOCIAL EVENTS

[illegible] Party [illegible] with appetizers co-sponsored by the Society for Single Professionals. Call 415-507-9962 or visit ThePartyHotline.com for info. Sat., July 25, 7-9 p.m., $40. The Restaurant, 800 Hartz Ave., Danville.

Lock & Key Singles Dance Society of Single Professionals party. For info, call 415-507-9962 or visit ThePartyHotline.com. Fri., July 24, 8 p.m., $20. [illegible] Hotel, 11950 Dublin Canyon Rd., Pleasanton.

SPORTS & OUTDOORS-PARTICIPATORY

Bike 4 Life [illegible] bike ride to Defremery Park, followed by a [illegible], skateboarding, rock climbing, a basketball tournament, a [illegible] game, and [illegible]. Sat., July 25, 2 p.m., free. Lake Merritt, [illegible] Oakland.

Free Museum Program [illegible] include gardening, arts, making movies, history, cooking, include exchange and nature. [illegible] Tuesdays-Saturdays, 2-5 p.m. Continues through Aug. 29, free. Peralta Hacienda Historical Park, 2465 34th Ave., Oakland, 510-532-9142, PeraltaHacienda.org.

Great Western Power Company Kid's Climb Summer Camp Private rockclimbing classes for kids ages 6-14. Advanced registration required. Through Aug. 14, 9 a.m.-noon, $200-250 per session. Great Western Power Company, 520 20th St., Oakland, 510-451-[illegible].

Lake Del Valle Aqua Challenge and Del Valle Tri With 2 mile, 1 mile, & half mile swims. Visit OnYourMarkEvents.com for more info. Sat., July 25, 8:30 a.m., $35-$40. Lake Del Valle, [illegible], Livermore, 510-562-PARK.

The Office of Parks and Recreation Celebrates 100 Year Anniversary With [illegible] in the pool, field vendors, crafts, music and performances by local artists and recreation performing arts programs, and a 3-on-3 basketball tournament. Sat., July 25, free. DeFremery Park, 1651 Adeline St., Oakland.

Papermaking with Papyrus Workshop teaches history and techniques of papyrus papermaking. Participants make their own paper with papyrus from the garden. Sat., July 25, 12:30-2 p.m., $8-$10. UC Berkeley Botanical Garden, 200 Centennial Dr., Berkeley, 510-643-2755, BotanicalGarden.berkeley.edu.

SPORTS-SPECTATOR

Oakland A's vs. Minnesota Twins Wed., July 22, 12:35 p.m., $9-$48. McAfee Coliseum, 7000 Coliseum Way, Oakland, 510-[illegible] Coliseum.com, 510-763-BALL, OaklandAthletics.mlb.com.

Vs. San Francisco Giants July 22-24, 7:05 p.m., $9-$46. McAfee Coliseum, 7000 Coliseum Way, Oakland, 510-569-2121, Coliseum.com.

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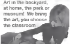
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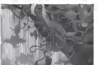
MUSEUMS & GALLERIES


Detail of David Burke's *Pandora's Eden, Tangled Underbelly*

Biospheres

Ten artists consider *Artificial Nature*

Sad times, according to Monty Python's Roger the Shrubber: "There is a pestilence upon this land; nothing is sacred. Even those who arrange and design shrubberies are under considerable economic stress in this period in history." American culture is confused and adrift, still bereft of unifying larger purpose even after the exit of Bush the Rogerer and his corporate buccaneers. (Remember "the vision thing"?) Contemporary art about nature reflects our current predicament, naturally, and our predilection, both triumphant and uneasy, for the virtual, artificial, and hybrid — for the personal and [illegible].

David Burke, Devin Cecil Wishing, Andy Gouveia, Clint Imboden, Liz Maher, Ginny Parsons, Mark Schroeder, Michael Singman Aste, Patch Wright, and **T. Joseph Enos** examine and explore the current zeitgeist, employing a variety of media and approaches. Burke's lushly colored paintings present forest or jungle views that stylize naturalistic elements (blossoms, lianas, vines, tendrils) into visionary landscapes that suggest Bruegel, Hundertwasser and, with their painterly drips and atmospheric perspective, Darren Waterston. The writhing pink blossoms in "Pandora's Eden ..." could have come from Max Ernst's primordial forests. Imboden's three sculptures use globes to comment on ecological and political themes: one globe is sectioned and pounded full of spikes, resembling a dandelion; another sits atop a tripod of crutches; a third sits cut apart and fashioned into a chafing dish atop a bomb casing, with the stenciled word "BOOM" inside. Maher constructs sculptures from a profusion of unlikely elements: "It's a Family Affair" is a chandelier sporting satin-sleeved bride's arms and hands proffering both pearl necklaces and daggers. Her meticulously sewn tree sculptures are likewise semi-human, featuring arms bearing candles and glasses of insulation foam bubbly, with French fries and Doritos spilling out from Freudian trunk cavities. Schroeder's sculptures contrast finely crafted organic wooden form (breasts, beehives, bombs) with fabricated metal geometry (gears) or free-form plaster or clay: the lump-like "#7" seems to have been assembled from a cookie or cake, a segmented spindle or earthworm, a bottle cap, and an acorn. Wright makes conceptual surrealist sculptures on biological themes from office supplies and furniture. "Whale Proof That Tables Had Legs" wraps a folding banquet table covered with barnacles, or white plaster, with the folded legs standing in for the tiny vestigial leg bones that cetaceans still possess. "Shark Felt..." is a flattened sharkskin mounted on the wall, bearskin rug-style with gaping maw, but the denticles of its abrasive skin, formerly used for sandpaper, are now replaced by [illegible]able rivet heads. *Artificial Nature* runs through August 23 at **Autobody Fine Art** (1517 Park St., Alameda). AutobodyFineArt.com or 510-865-2608

— *DeWitt Cheng*

ART GALLERIES

ABCO Warehouse Space. Challenge of Warehouse: Community art exhibit commenting on Oakland Warehouses. Through Dec. 27. [illegible] Filbert St., Emeryville. ABCOArtGallery.com.

Alta [illegible]. Anthony Holdsworth: Cityscape Paintings. Through Aug. 31. 2980 College Ave. (Suite 4), Berkeley. 510-421-1255. AltaGallery.com.

Artisan Salon and Gallery. Marlon Sagoso [illegible]: Presenting new artist on board. Through Aug. 23. 1407 Solano Ave., Berkeley. 510-527-3100.

Autobody Fine Art. *Artificial Nature:* Artists explore the boundaries between what is real and what is synthetic. Featuring work by Clint Imboden, Andy Gouveia, Devin Cecil-Wishing, Liz Maher, Mark Schroeder, David Burke, Ginny Parsons, Michael Singman-Aste, and Kerstan Wright, plus an installation by T. Joseph Enos. Through Aug. 23. 1517 Park Street, Alameda.

Bedford Gallery. Full Tilt: A Short History of Skate Art: Exhibition features more than 100 decks borrowed from [illegible] skaters, and collectors from across the country. Through Sept. 13. 1601 Civic Dr. (Dean Lesher Regional Center for the Arts), Walnut Creek. 925-295-1417. BedfordGallery.org.

Berkeley Art Center. Oakland & Oakland: Group exhibition featuring work by [illegible] Baum, Joanna Briggs, and Helen Macken Morre. Through July 26. 1275 Walnut St. (in Live Oak Park), Berkeley. 510-644-6893. BerkeleyArtCenter.org.

Berkeley Art Museum. Designs. Natures: Artists Remedy in a Changing Planet: Exhibition explores relationship between human communities and the natural world. Featuring work by Mark Dion, Ann Hamilton, [illegible], Marlon Ramirez [illegible]. Sept. 27. Through Sept. 27. 2625 Durant Ave. (UC Berkeley campus), Berkeley. 510-642-0808. BAMPFA.Berkeley.edu.

Bridgehead Studio. Sugar @ the Root: An Erotic Photography Movement: Featuring work Leonore McLemore. Sat. July 25, 8-11 p.m. 2548 Blanding Ave., Alameda.

Craft and Cultural Arts Gallery. The Many Faces of Frida: Frida Kahlo group exhibition curated by Rachel-Anne Palacios. Through Aug. 28. 1515 Clay St. (State of California Office Building atrium), Oakland. 510-622-[illegible]. OaklandCulturalArts.org.

Eclectix Gallery. This Town: Salon show featuring work by Dan Mojonnier, Joanne Corrales, Alicia Lubbreat, Mans Dalley, Pico Gee, [illegible], John Howell, Burke Johnson, Larry Jones, Eric Joyner, Jennie Katz, Mark Kessler, Susie Metcalf, [illegible], Patricia Mitchell, Crystal Morey, Marlon Oakes, Christopher Petersen, Randy Pedresch, Andrew Jay Schlappel, John Scalora, Laurie Swenk, Stephen Taylor, Cynthia Tom, Peter Vennington, and Katherine Weinerhaust. Through Aug. 18. 10932 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito. 510-964-7284. EclectixGallery.com.

Float Center. The Mouse Must Persuade the Duck: Encaustic drawings & monotypes by Cheryl Fimbock, plus audio art by Sudhu Iwan. Through Sept. 30. 1881 Colton Pl., [illegible] Emeryville. 510-535-1700. TheFloatCenter.com.

Il Julius Designs. Patricia Gillespie Exhibit: Displaying sculptures made of fabric and wood. Through Aug. 29. 3756 Shattuck Ave. (at Delaware St.), Berkeley.

Holch Gallery. Undated Layer: New drawings and sculpture by Mark Inglis Taylor and Franco Poeler. Through Aug. 1. 482 23rd St., Douglas. 510-803-8843. EggPark.org.

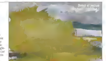
Inferno Gallery. JQ Manton: Solo exhibition of digital prints. Through July 25. 4401 San Leandro St., Oakland. 510-430-4845. InfernoGallery.com.

Institute of Mosaic Art. Mosaics of the Mind's Eye & Other Student/Faculty Exhibits: Student exhibition showcase features Mosaics of the Mind's Eye (Intro taught by Lillian Sizemore), Student Sculpture (Oakland ICE), Introduction to Smalti, Introduction to Glass Mosaics, and Renegade Quilting. Through Aug. 30. 3001 Chapman St., Oakland. 510-817-5000. InstituteofMosaicArt.com.

Johansson Projects. Back Channels: Works by Evan B. Harris and Alisha Wessler. Through Aug. 1. 2300 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-444-9140. JohanssonProjects.com.

John F. Kennedy University Arts and Consciousness Gallery, Douglas. Breath Paintings by Lisa Ahern. July 23-Aug. 15.

PICKS



Joshua Dildine

The lines between various modes of painting are hard-fought, wavering boundaries in **Joshua Dildine**'s dynamic drawings and paintings. They depict the complex consciousness of "individuals in a Google-driven society [who] process (or fail to process) ... vast amounts of information." The media sphere takes visual form here as a collision or interweaving of painting styles: tangles or clusters of juicy loaded brushwork override linear frameworks or scaffolds, deep perspective space overwrites flat horizontal lozenges hovering just beyond the picture plane, and abstract elements take on figurative readings. Then the process reverses and we see the other aspect ... the way that the multiple readings in optical illusions supersede each other but never coexist: bunny or duck, profile or goblet. Figurative paintings by **Diana Castello** and performance photos by **Igor Josifov** are also on view. Through July 31 at **Alphonse Berber Gallery** (2546 Bancroft Way, Berkeley). AlphonseBerber.com or 510-649-9492. — *DeWitt Cheng*

Glimpses in Time

This second annual international juried photo competition is dedicated to the Mexican modernist photographer Manuel Alvarez Bravo; curated by Bart Ross and judged by the Oakland Museum of California's René de Guzman, it features 62 photos representing the breadth of contemporary practice. A few standouts: Robert Parker Blackburn's "Girl in Peace — Carousel," Erich Bunge Romero's "She Kept the Crumpled Map in Her Purse," Malcolm Lubliner's "China Camp," Len Speier's "Skaters, Beijing, China," Kelly McCarthy's "After I'm Gone," Zohra Kalinkowitz's "Shiprock 2," John Vias's "Wall and Hedge," Roy Berkenstein's "Industrial Landscape San Francisco," and Bill Dzurenne's "Stumps." *Glimpses In Time: 2009 Juried Photography Exhibit* runs through July 31 at **Joyce Gorden Gallery** (406 14th St., Oakland). JoyceGordenGallery.com or 510-465-8928. — *D.C.*

Perceive & Connect

Kate Baum, Jeanne Briggs, and Indira Martina Morre are exhibiting color photographs, assemblages, and paintings, respectively, at Berkeley Art Center. Baum's color photographs are lyrical and ironic: A lapping pool sidestair covered with leaves visually links depths, surface, and sky, while ice-cream slabs melt on a hot curb, and doughnuts lie in a shallow stream like stepping-stones or life preservers. Briggs crafts surreal figures from recycled wood, leather, and metal; her life-size leather-covered figures have an erotic vibe despite their mythological titles (drill, baby drill, "Earth Mother"), the smaller, more totemic chess pieces suggest columns, finials, and balusters for a visionary architecture. Morre's layered works on gesso-glazed linen over panel feature galaxies of hand-drawn Wingding-like elements — capsules, circles, dots, squares, clock dials, map pins — hovering at different visual "depths" — floating signifiers in Earth orbit ... space junk? *Perceive & Connect* runs through July 26 at Berkeley Art Center (1275 Walnut St., Berkeley). BerkeleyArtCenter.org or 510-644-6893. — *D.C.*

2066 San Pablo Ave. (2nd floor), Berkeley. 510-649-0499. [illegible]

Kala Art Institute: Residency Threads New work by [illegible] Kwak, Samantha Lawson, Chris Kubick and Lindsey White. Through Aug. 15. 1060 Heinz Ave., Berkeley. 510-549-2977. Kala.org.

La Peña Cultural Center: La Peña at 34: A History in Murals Three original portable murals commissioned by La Peña to Bay Area artists Ray Patlan ([illegible]), Susan Lundy ([illegible]), [illegible], and Juana Alicia Montoya ([illegible]). Through July 31. 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568. LaPena.org.

Luka's Taverna & Lounge: Black Dog Arts and Craft Collective Arts & crafts bazaar with work by local artists. Sundays, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Continues through Sept. 20. Free. 2221 Broadway, Oakland. 510-451-4677. LukasOakland.com.

Mercury 20 Gallery: Wood and Water and Forecast Exhibits featuring work by Mary Curtis Ratcliff and Anna Vaughan (Wood and Water) and [illegible] (Forecast). Through Aug. 1. 25 Grand Ave., Oakland. 510-[illegible]

Oakland Public Library, Lakeview Branch: States of Grace [illegible]

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acrylic, multimedia collage, and paper works. Through July 30. [illegible] 510-238-7344, [illegible]

Pro Arts: Bay Area Currents 2009: Selections by Kevin B. Chen, Intersection for the Arts Group exhibition featuring work by [illegible], Adam Friedman, Daniel Healey, Teresa Anderson, [illegible], Patrick McKenzie, Stephanie Metz, Billy O'Callaghan, [illegible], Elizabeth [illegible] and Alison Wright. Through July 24. 550 2nd St., Oakland. 510-763-4361. ProArtsGallery.org.

Red Door Gallery: Wandering Featuring installations by Kimberley [illegible] and Yasmin Lambie-Simpson. Through July 31. 490 20th St., Oakland.

Sacred Door Tattoo: SRE Gallery, [illegible]: The Art of [illegible] An [illegible] of comic books, cartoons, and punk rock, [illegible] Through July 30. 1728 University Ave., Berkeley. 510-888-1383. [illegible]

San Pablo Arts Gallery: [illegible] Digital photography by John [illegible] and sculpture by Regina [illegible] Through July 27. [illegible] San Pablo Ave. (Maple Hall Civic Center), San Pablo. 510-[illegible]

Slate Gallery: Imaginary Landscapes: New Painting and Sculpture by Jessica [illegible] [illegible] Through Aug. 14. Free. 4770 Telegraph Ave., Oakland.

Swarm Studios + Gallery: [illegible] Video installation by Andrea [illegible] Through Aug. 2. 560 2nd St. #4, Oakland. 510-839-2787. SwarmStudios.net.

The Compound Gallery: [illegible] Art by [illegible] based on emotional and physical effects of medical [illegible] plus [illegible] works exploring the intersections of [illegible] and technology. Through Aug. 3. 6604 San Pablo Ave., Oakland. 510-[illegible] TheCompoundGallery.com.

UC Berkeley Botanical Garden: Using Earth and Plant Pigments as an Artist's [illegible] Bring a sketchbook and pencil for these evening classes in the garden with artist [illegible]. Limited to 12 participants. Wednesdays, 6-9 p.m. Continues through July 29. $180-$200. 200 Centennial Dr., Berkeley. 510-643-2755. BotanicalGarden.berkeley.edu.

[illegible] Artspace: [illegible] Contributing artists include [illegible] Through July 31. 786 40th St., Oakland. [illegible]

Zza's Trattoria: Red and White Exhibit curated by Ori Kaufman featuring works by [illegible], Sarah Filley, [illegible], James Hall, [illegible], Ori Kaufman, [illegible], Nathaniel Parsons, [illegible] Porter, and [illegible]. Through Aug. 31. 552 Grand Ave., Oakland. 510-839-9124. [illegible]

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Google Voice Comes Out of Beta

by Mielle Sullivan, Janus Networks

Recently Google took its unified voice service, Google Voice, out of Beta and into invite. The service is likely be available to anyone in the US in a few weeks. Google Voice allows you to have one number ring on multiple devices, so you can have one number at home, at work and on the go for life. The convenience Google Voice offers users has some analysts believing Google Voice could relegate mobile service providers to the much feared "dumb pipes."

Google voice works by giving you a number that becomes your new "universal" number. When someone calls your universal number, the call will be routed to your pre-selected devices. If you move or change mobile carriers, just change your Google Voice settings and the number will follow you. Likewise, when you want to make a call, you use the local Google Voice access number which then routes your call through the Google cloud to its end receiver. An app will make the process seamless on most smartphones.

Beyond a universal number, Google Voice has a myriad of other impressive features. You can set calls from specific numbers to ring on certain devices or go straight to voicemail, you can have a number ring on one device at one time of day and another at a different time of or day, your voicemails can be automatically transcribed and sent to you via email and text, you can personalize greetings and ringtones to individual callers, you can store and send your text messages online, you can call anywhere in the US for free, record calls, make conference calls... the list goes on. And more is in development. What's most impressive? It is all free.

As per usual with Google, the service will be ad supported. The company has filed patent on a software that serves ads based on location to callers when they are on hold or before the receiver picks up a call.

Will Google Voice soon turn mobile carriers to be "dumb pipes"? In my view, the "dumb pipes" term is more hyperbolic than descriptive of the challenges mobile service providers face. Phone companies will always want to charge for as many services as they can. While customers, increasingly, want to use their cell phones as just another Internet portal. But that doesn't mean that every time innovation creates a better way for users to better manage their mobile communications, that mobile providers lose their value. There will always be tension to do more on phones for less, that's just economics. Phone companies will just have to continually re-bundle their data packages to keep up with innovation.

You can contact the Author at press@janusnetworks.com

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THEATER & DANCE

THEATER & PERFORMING ARTS

Almost Eyes, A Love Story from the [illegible] Musical based on the life of San Francisco [illegible]. [illegible] by A. [illegible] with music by JoAnn [illegible] and musical direction by Chris [illegible]. Fri., July 24, 8 p.m.; Sat., July 25, 2 & 8 p.m. $10-$18. Cal State East Bay [illegible] Auditorium, 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd., Hayward. CSUEastBay.edu.

The [illegible] of [illegible] City of Pleasanton Civic Arts [illegible] free Shakespeare in the Park production of Shakespeare's [illegible] comedy [illegible]. Saturdays, Sundays, 7:30 p.m. Continues through Aug. 2. free. Amador Valley Community Park, 4301 Black Ave. (adjacent to [illegible] Aquatic Center), Pleasanton. 925-931-5340.

[illegible] Oakland, or [illegible] [illegible] presents the San Leandro Players' production of the play by [illegible], inspired by Charles [illegible]. Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. Continues through Aug. 16. $10-$18. San Leandro [illegible] Auditorium, 321 W. Estudillo Ave., San Leandro. 510-517-3907.

Diablo Actors' Ensemble Presents [illegible] Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m. Continues through Aug. 8. $15-$25. Diablo Actors Ensemble Theatre, 1345 Locust St., Walnut Creek. 925-482-5818.

[illegible] and [illegible] One-act plays by Lower Bottom Playaz [illegible]. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m. Continues through July 26. $10. [illegible] Memorial Theater, 920 Peralta St., Oakland. 510-288-0927.

Lady [illegible] World premiere of [illegible] stage production [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible], Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 3 p.m. Continues through July 26. $15-$35. Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Ave., Berkeley. 510-848-7800, BerkeleyCityClub.com.

Los Miserables Youth [illegible] Company production directed by [illegible]. Starting July 25. Thursdays-Saturdays, 7:30 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. Continues through Aug. 2. $8-$20. Julia Morgan Center for the Arts, 2640 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-8542. JuliaMorgan.org.

Livermore Shakespeare Festival With alternating performances of William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream and Anton Chekhov's The Seagull. [illegible] by [illegible]. For [illegible] call 800-838-3006 or visit LivermoreShakes.org. Thursdays-Sundays, 7:30 p.m. Continues through Aug. 9. $15-$35. Concannon Vineyard, 4590 Tesla Rd., Livermore.

Love Letters Play [illegible] the [illegible] romance [illegible] Gardner and Andrew [illegible] Directed by [illegible], featuring five pairs of actors. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. Wednesdays, Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays, 3:30 p.m. Continues through Aug. 2. $30. Campbell Theater, 636 Ward St., Martinez. 925-798-1300.

Private Lives [illegible] production of the play by Noël Coward. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 4 p.m., Tuesdays-Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Continues through Aug. 2. $20-$50. Bruns Memorial Amphitheater, 100 Gateway Blvd. (off Highway 24 east of Caldecott Tunnel), Orinda. 510-548-5900. CalShakes.org.

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown [illegible] Ensemble of Berkeley production of Clark Gesner's musical based on the comic strip by Charles Schulz. Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m. Continues through Aug. 15. $12-$15. Live Oak Theater, 1301 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-5580.

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DANCE-PERFORMANCE

[illegible] Beginning and intermediate dance lessons, plus a live dance performance by a different act each week. Wednesdays, 8 p.m. $15, $8 students. Shattuck Down Low, 2284 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-548-1159. ShattuckDownLow.com.

LIVE VARIETY

Film Screening: [illegible] Q & A with [illegible] and [illegible] to follow. Tue., July 28, 8 p.m. [illegible] Saul's Restaurant and Delicatessen, 1475 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-848-3354. www.saulsdeli.com.

[illegible] With [illegible]. Sat., July 25, 7:30 p.m. Fox Theater, 1807 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. TheFoxOakland.com.

[illegible] Mondays With live music, [illegible], including [illegible], and [illegible] Pizza right outside [illegible]. Mondays, 5:30-8 p.m. Continues through July 27. free. [illegible] 48 [illegible] St., Oakland.

Waterfront Flicks [illegible] movie screenings at the [illegible] Jack London Market Building. [illegible]. For info, visit JackLondonSquare.com. Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Continues through Aug. 20. free. Jack London Square, 70 Washington St. (foot of Broadway), Oakland. 510-697-3372. JackLondonSquare.com.

WWII Home Front Film Festival Popular full-length movies that were shown on the Home Front during the WWII period. Fourth Thursday of every month, 4:30-8 p.m., Fourth Thursday of every August, 6:30-8 p.m. Continues through Aug. 27. free. Red Oak Victory Ship, 1337 Canal Blvd., Richmond. 510-232-2013.

COMEDY

Andrew Norelli Tuesdays, Wednesdays, 7:30-8 p.m. Continues through July 22. $10-$20. Tommy T's Comedy & Steakhouse, 5104 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. 925-227-1800.

John Witherspoon Thu., July 23, 7:30 p.m.; Fri., July 24, 7:30 & 9:30 p.m.; Sat., July 25, 7 & 9:30 p.m.; Sun., July 26, 7 p.m. $20-$40. Tommy T's Comedy & Steakhouse, 5104 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. 925-227-1800.

PICKS

The Taming of the Shrew

Admittedly it was no picnic being a woman during the Elizabethan Age — much less a bossy, hot-headed woman who didn't cotton to arranged marriages or flagellation. Enter Katharine, the "shrewish" daughter of a Paduan landowner. Known for terrorizing her [illegible] suitors and tying up her sister Bianca, she's perhaps the most famous of Shakespeare's irrepressible, impassionate broads. She's also cause for consternation among feminist scholars, many of whom object to her treatment in ***The Taming of the Shrew***. In the original play, Katharine learns to love her equally shrewish husband, Petruchio, after a long, cruel game of reverse psychology. An updated, [illegible] version by the all-female theater company Woman's Will presents this "taming" more as a protracted flirtation than a course of punishment and reform. Katharine (played by beautiful Kate Jopson) and Petruchio (the ebullient [illegible]) are well matched, personality-wise, and have palpable chemistry. The prospect of a [illegible] scenic rather than a traditional romance changes the sentiment of the play, and makes it, in a way, more Shakespearian. Through Aug. 16 in **Bay Area parks**. Free. WomansWill.org — *Rachel Swan*

Too Big to Fail

Now fifty years old and well-entrenched as the Bay Area's leading producer of free agit-prop plays, the San Francisco Mime Troupe is tackling ever-more complex issues. Where in the past it poked fun at right-wing "family values" zealots and [illegible] profiteers, head writer Michael Gene Sullivan et [illegible] appropriating the language of stock brokers and economists. [illegible] ***Too Big to Fail*** makes a parable of the global economic crisis. Set in a remote African village, it's the story of an ambitious but good-hearted man who falls prey to a credit lender. After his beloved goat gets repossessed, he sets off to fight the Wall Street demons who are trying to corrupt his village. Scored by Pat Moran (of Lord Loves a Working Man fame), *Too Big to Fail* tells the story of the current recession in the form of African folk tale. Once the villagers acquire "the magic of credit," they start buying cell phones with Beyoncé ringtones, Nintendo Wii, and mortgages on new huts, naively thinking they've benefitted from the banks' largesse. From an audience vantage point it's easy to laugh and watch the situation unravel. It's less easy to forget that so many of us made the same mistake. At **Bay Area parks** through Sept. 27. Free. SFMT.org — *R.S.*

The Taming of the Shrew

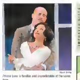
[illegible]

THEATER

THE PERILS OF PRIVATE LIVES

Mark Rucker sharpens a 1930s comedy of manners in his latest Cal Shakes production

By Rachel Swan



Kevin Berne

Private Lives is familiar and unpredictable at the same time.

Amanda Prynne is that rare female character who can describe herself to a T: Not innocent and girlish, as she explains to second husband Victor in Noël Coward's 1930 comedy, *Private Lives*, but "jagged with sophistication." It's perfect imagery for someone who falls in a lineage of hard, intelligent British women, from Elizabeth Bennet on down. At the beginning of *Private Lives*, Amanda and Victor are honeymooning in a posh French hotel, blissfully unaware that her ex-husband, Elyot Chase, lies just next door with his own new spouse. Trouble ensues once Amanda and Elyot bump into each other, causing a combustible reaction. Passions rekindle, hard feelings resurface, and new relationships vaporize. It's enough drama to buoy a two-and-a-half hour comedy of manners, now almost a century old but still relevant to anyone who's endured a horrible divorce, or sustained a "closet" relationship. A new Cal Shakes production stays true to the original setting but approaches Coward's themes from a modern sensibility — so the talk is sexier and the passion more violent. Directed by the amazing Mark Rucker, it's both a character study and a primer on what not to do in a relationship. As comedy, it's terrific.

This *Private Lives* has the appearance of being concise and spare — two sets, three acts, five characters — when it's actually quite complex. First off, it requires incredible stamina on the part of its male and female lead. Amanda (played by the regal Diana LaMar) and Elyot (Stephen Barker Turner) both have long swaths of dialogue in which they attempt to iron out their marital difficulties but wind up volleying insults and hurling allegations at one another. Secondly, it's an incredibly busy production. The stage directions for Elyot and Amanda's fight scenes require them to constantly move about the space, tromping up stairwells, breaking furniture, or punching frustratedly at the air. It can get a bit distracting at times, but it helps underline two of the play's main themes: 1) That love and war are hopelessly intertwined and 2) that affluent, well-mannered Brits can be downright savage behind closed doors.

And granted, they're an absolutely perfect match. Brainy cosmopolitan Amanda is much better suited to Elyot than his new wife Sybil (played by Sarah Nealis, who recently starred in Cal Shakes' *Romeo and Juliet*). Sartorial choices alone speak volumes about the two women: Amanda, with her dark bob and classy evening gowns, versus red-headed Sybil with her blobby floral print dresses. It's like trying to compare a noir heroine to Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm. Moreover, hot-blooded Elyot piques Amanda's interest much more than her current husband, the staid Victor Prynne (played by another *Romeo and Juliet* emeritus, the excellent Jud Williford). Thus *Private Lives* is, in fact, full of symbolism that highlights the social chemistry between Elyot and Amanda, from their matching pajamas to the way they chomp olives from their martini glasses. When they first meet on the hotel terrace, an orchestra plays Perry Como's "Someday I'll Find You" over and over again, causing Elyot to almost lose composure. "Extraordinary how potent cheap music is."

LaMar and Turner are two extraordinary actors who obviously understand their characters and know how to get at the psychology of a bad relationship. In the first act, Amanda describes them as "two vile acids bubbling about in a matrimonial bottle," which turns out to be apropos. The second act follows the ex-spouses to Amanda's apartment in Paris, with its old-fashioned rotary telephone, opera 45s, and colored lanterns dangling from the ceiling. For about five minutes they seem contentedly enraptured with one another, and the next instant someone says something to upset that fragile equilibrium. Fighting, for them, amounts to a form of *pas de deux*: Both are snappy and sharp-witted, but also quick to use teeth, claws and fists. Such turbulence, juxtaposed with the cloying torch songs that never fail to ignite old passions, is what brings this relationship to life.

Private Lives is a thoroughly wonderful play. Coward's script is a long series of quips and witty rejoinders, and Rucker's interpretation gives it more of a barbed edge. The dialogue crackles, and the actors — including Liam Vincent, who waltzes in toward the end to play an irritable French butler — all inhabit their roles with gusto. Best of all, it's familiar and utterly unpredictable at the same time. There's that "aha" moment at the beginning, when Amanda and Elyot accidentally cross paths, fall back in love, and have their first recon mission. Thenceforth you're pretty sure which way this play's headed. But then, all of a sudden, it goes the other way. You're in the grip of these characters with their poor decisions and perilous relationships, and you have no idea what's going to happen next. But that's most of the fun. ●

Show Info
Private Lives runs through Aug. 2 at Bruns Amphitheatre (100 Gateway Blvd., Orinda). $20-$58. CalShakes.org

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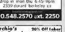
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LECTURES & LIT

Voice for the Voiceless

Summer Brenner's fiction tackles tough topics

Summer Brenner

Summer Brenner's books for kids aren't fairy tales. The heroine of *Ivy: Tale of a Homeless Girl in San Francisco* learns that looks can deceive and that "sane" people can be vicious while "crazy" ones can save each others' lives. In *Richmond Tales: Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle*, a time-traveling boy and girl meet beleaguered immigrants, homeless workers, and adolescent Ohlones. Brenner's books for grownups aren't all sunshine and rainbows, either. *I-5: A Novel of Crime, Transport, and Sex* is the story of Anya, an Eastern European victim of the global sex-trafficking industry. Brenner can't help but write about social injustice. The die was cast when she was a tiny tot growing up in Georgia.

"The South was a battleground, and politics were much discussed at home," says the Berkeley resident, who will discuss *I-5* at **Pegasus** (2349 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley) on Thursday, July 23. "In first grade, my teacher asked which presidential candidate our parents would be voting for. I was the only one to raise my wee hand for Adlai Stevenson." She remembers learning early and indelibly about racism and poverty.

"How these themes interweave into my writing is a harder question. I'm interested in lots of things and write about what interests me," Brenner says. "However, my fictional characters inhabit a big world. They take in what we all take in: some garbage, some truth. Honestly, I think it's hard to deny that living is a political act."

Having worked in Richmond for more than ten years, she received a grant from the Creative Work Fund to create a young-adult novel reflecting the lives of kids in its Iron Triangle neighborhood, best known for its high crime rate. "I hit the ground running. ... The idea was to take a place that is almost a no-man's land and turn it into a somewhere."

The result, published this year, is *Richmond Tales*, in which pals Mario and Maisha travel into the past and future. At one point, the pair awaken in a movie theater, surrounded by snoring adults. It's 1942; WWII shipyard work has quadrupled Richmond's population. The city lacks sufficient housing for these new workers, so downtown cinemas stayed open around the clock, giving them *somewhere* to sleep. As part of a library summer reading program, *Richmond Tales* is now being distributed to more than 4,500 fourth- and fifth-graders.

Before she began writing fiction, Brenner wrote poetry; her many volumes include *The Soft Room* and *Everyone Came Dressed as Water*. It was great practice, because "poetry is where I learned to break down words into inhalations and exhalations," she explains. "If the poem 'worked' — which means a vast number of things — that made it meaningful. All that applies to fiction, too. I lay down the tracks and edit obsessively. The words — syllables, consonants, stress, breath — have to work in the sentence; the sentences in the paragraph. Mix in characters, dialogue, and narrative, and you get the invention of a tremendous problem. I'm the only one who can solve it." 7:30 p.m., free. PegasusBookstore.com

— *Anneli Rufus*

LECTURES

Business Accounting Sat., July 25, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., free. Newark Library, 6300 Civic Terrace Ave., Newark. 510-795-2627

The Employment Law Group Summer Published Series Lectures on managing the [illegible] of wage and hour claims, [illegible] legal interviews, avoiding employment lawsuits, and navigating the leave laws. Continental breakfast provided. Thu., July 23, 7:30 a.m.; Thu., Aug. 20, 7:30 a.m.; Thu., Sept. 24, 7:30 a.m. $35 per program or $100 for all four. Burnham Brown Office, 1901 Harrison St., Oakland. 510-835-6733, BurnhamBrown.com.

Indigenous Delegation @ Palestine Presents: Roots of Resistance Film Festival Film screenings and discussion. Wed., July 22, 6-10 p.m., $7. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568, LaPena.org.

Managing Your Business @ Hard Times Thu., July 23, 6-8 p.m., free. Newark Library, 6300 Civic Terrace Ave., Newark. 510-795-2627

The Miracle of Berkeley: People in Extraordinary Times Lecture by [illegible] Sun., July 26, 10-11 a.m., free. Berkeley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 1924 Cedar St. (at Bonita St.), Berkeley. 510-841-4824, BFUU.org.

The Money Pit Film presents and discussion. Thu., July 23, 7 p.m., $5-$15. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568, LaPena.org.

"Reframing the California Budget and the Process for Change" Presentation and discussion led by the Bay Area Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club. Thu., July 23, 7 p.m., free. Humanist Hall, 390 27th St., Oakland. 510-451-5818, HumanistHall.org.

LITERARY EVENTS

Bay Area Free Book Exchange Pairing unwanted books with the people who want them. Saturdays, Sundays, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Continues through Dec. 1, free. Book Exchange, 10520 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito. 510-526-2941.

David Kessler Discussing *The End of Overeating: Taking Control of the Insatiable American Appetite*. Thu., July 23, 7:30 p.m., free. Mrs. Dalloway's Literary and Garden Arts, 2904 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-704-8222, MrsDalloways.com.

[illegible] Presenting his poems. Sat., July 25, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., free. Green Shutter Gallery, 22654 Main St., Hayward. 510-538-2787, HaywardArts.org.

[illegible] Discussing *The Sharing Solution*. Wed., July 29, 7 p.m., free. Diesel, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965, DieselBookstore.com.

Music of the World/La Peña Summer With MamaCoAtl. Fourth and Second Sunday of every month, 2:30 p.m., free. Rebecca's Books, 3268 Adeline St., Berkeley.

Nick Laird Discussing *Glover's Mistake*. Wed., July 22, 7:30 p.m., free. Moe's Books, 2476 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2087.

Poet Saga: Poems with local contributing poets Mari L'Esperance, [illegible] Presenting *Writing the Life Poetic: An Invitation to Read and Write Poetry*. Fri., July 24, 7:30 p.m., free. Mrs. Dalloway's Literary and Garden Arts, 2904 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-704-8222, MrsDalloways.com.

Poetry Flash presents Brendan Constantine, Steve Reed and Cathie Sandstrom Thu., July 23, 7:30 p.m., free. Moe's Books, 2476 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2087.

[illegible] Anonymous Club Fourth Tuesday of every month, 7 p.m., free. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave., El Cerrito. 510-526-7512, [illegible]

Summer Brenner and [illegible] Reading from their respective new novels, *I5* and *The Invisible Double*. Thu., July 23, 7:30 p.m., free. Pegasus Books Downtown, 2349 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-649-1320, PegasusBookstore.com.

Writing and Getting Published in the Book Business Today Lecture by editor Alan Rinzler. Sat., July 25, 11 a.m., free. Mrs. Dalloway's Literary and Garden Arts, 2904 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-704-8222, MrsDalloways.com. ●

PICKS

David Kessler

David Kessler

Obesity is no accident, according to pediatrician and former UCSF Medical School dean **David Kessler**. His new book *The End of Overeating: Taking Control of the Insatiable American Appetite*, which he discusses at **Mrs. Dalloway's** (2904 College Ave., Berkeley) on Thursday, July 23, examines an American problem and cutting-edge tools for stemming it. 7:30 p.m., free. MrsDalloways.com — *Anneli Rufus*

Brendan Constantine

Touted as a witty, [illegible] the guerrilla [illegible] of poets, **Brendan Constantine** (sample lines: "Why do we say Good Morning like a command/when we know it won't ok still?") introduces his new first full-length collection, *Letters to Guns*, at **Moe's** (2476 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley) on Thursday, July 23, sharing the podium with fellow poets Steven Reed and Cathy Sandstrom. 7:30 p.m., free. MoesBooks.com — *A.R.*

Manga Workshop

Created in the wake of the September 11 attacks, former *Harvard Crimson* cartoonist Oliver Chin's graphic novel *9/11* addresses that day's events from the perspectives of multicultural Bay Area youth. At the **San Lorenzo Library** (395 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo) on Saturday, July 25, Chin hosts a **workshop on making graphic novels and manga**. 1 p.m., free. ACLibrary.org — *A.R.*

SARK

With an array of inspirational, self-illustrated books such as *Eat Mangoes Naked* and *Transformation Soup*, the writer and artist who calls herself **SARK** is an international cult favorite. At the **Hayward Main Library** (835 C St. at Mission Blvd., Hayward) on Saturday, July 25, she hosts a four-hour interactive writing workshop based on her latest volume, *Juicy Pens, Thirsty Paper*. 10:30 a.m., free. Library.ci.hayward.ca.us — *A.R.*

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BODY&SOUL

Watering the Roots

Childhood qigong lessons later saved Alex Tuggle's life

Other kids' dads were into golf, gourmet cooking — maybe a little yoga. **Alex Tuggle**'s dad was into qigong.

It all started in the late 1970s when the senior Tuggle, then a successful Southern California lawyer, sought an acupuncturist to help his wife. "By chance," says Tuggle, "one of his law clients recommended Hua-Ching Ni."

A world-renowned Taoist master who traces his wisdom through an unbroken succession spanning 74 generations back to the Han Dynasty, Ni arrived in the United States in 1976, shortly before Tuggle's mother became his patient. She was so pleased with the results that she began studying acupuncture herself. Meanwhile, the lawyer was learning yet another skill from Ni: qigong, which he liked so much that he became an instructor. Tuggle retains vivid childhood memories of practicing with his dad's group every Sunday morning in a park at age six or seven. "We had to wake up so early those Sundays. I didn't want to go. My sister and I were the only children in the group. It was like church, except that nobody at school could relate."

Alex Tuggle

But later, those childhood lessons would prove infinitely precious. Hit by a car while rollerblading at age twelve, Tuggle sustained a broken ankle and a serious head injury that kept him in intensive care for two weeks and a foot-to-hip cast for even longer. "I thank God that I survived such a devastating blow to my body," he reflects. But the accident's effects ran deep. As a young adult, Tuggle suffered painful neck stiffness and unbearable pressure in his head. After other treatments failed to help, he returned to his roots.

With qigong and acupuncture, "my muscles were able to loosen up. ... Through much practice and observation, I found certain techniques for relieving pain, muscle aches, orthopedic misalignments, and many other musculoskeletal ailments." These worked for him — as, he surmised, they had worked for countless others through the ages. Making up his mind to spread the wisdom, he followed in both of his parents' footsteps and is now a qigong instructor and licensed acupuncturist practicing in Oakland.

As he does every Monday evening, Tuggle teaches **Sacred Turtle Qigong** at the **Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists Hall** (1606 Bonita Ave., Berkeley) on July 27. Sacred Turtle Qigong targets the spine, back muscles, and kidneys. "For me it's been the most powerful healing tool. It involves stretching meridians, using the breath to visualize and guide energy through them. This visualization entails "drawing water energy up from deep inside the earth — the turtle represents the water element — then using it to nourish our spinal fluid, brain, bones, and kidneys, which are the main water organs." Tuggle proffers a favorite comparison. "Even if you cut a tree all the way down to the roots, but then you water the roots, it's going to grow back." 6 p.m., $5-$10. Holistic-Back-Relief.com

— Anneli Rufus

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Birthing From Within & Yoga: Childbirth Preparation Series Meets six Wednesdays (no class July 15). Info: [illegible] .com. Wednesdays, 6:30-9 p.m. Continues through Aug. 19. $250 per couple. BirthWays, 1000 Shattuck Ave. Ste. 120, Berkeley.

Introduction to Herbalism Four-week course focuses on herb identification and usage. Mondays, 7 p.m. Continues through July 27. $350. [illegible] Center of Health Studies, 2564 University Ave., Berkeley. 510-540-8010.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Food for Thought Readings by Berkeley psychic Jessica Ration. Thursdays, 6-7 p.m. [illegible] Gallery, 1958 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-644-4464.

How to Forgive for Good: Practical Ways to Let Go Rev. Mary Ellen Ridden teaches a medical approach to forgiveness. Sundays, 9:30 a.m. Continues through July 26. Donations accepted. Lake Merritt United Methodist Church, 1330 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland. 510-465-4793. LakeMerritt UMC.org.

Lunchtime Dreaming David Jenkins, Ph.D., facilitates this weekly drop-in group for women to experience a dreamtime. Wednesdays, 12-1:30 p.m. BFUU, Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists, 3224 Center St. (at Bonita St.), Oakland. 510-848-4824. [illegible] .net/bfuu.

Mandana Community Recovery Center Friday Night Meditation Meditation history, posture and breath techniques, retreat exploration, and different styles of meditation. Fridays, 8-9 p.m. Free for Mandana CRC members, $3 for nonmembers. Mandana Community Recovery Center, 3800 Howe St., Oakland. 510-528-9680.

Mandana Community Recovery Center Sunday Education Presentation A different holistic or spiritual topic that can help with addiction recovery is addressed each week. Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m., free for Mandana CRC members, $3 for nonmembers. Mandana Community Recovery Center, 3800 Howe St., Oakland. 510-501-9680.

TAKETINA: Rhythm Meditation for Body & Brain Three-hour workshop on deep relaxation and synchronizing brain hemispheres. Sat., July 25, 2:45-6 p.m. $20-$30. Rhythm and Sound Space, 1125 Colusa Ave., Berkeley. 415-370-1308.

RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY

Core Curriculum Tuesday Nights Courses open to everyone, but highly recommended for people interested in leadership positions in the church. An optional potluck dinner at 6 p.m. will precede worship (7 p.m.) and programs (7:30 p.m.). Call for schedule. Tuesdays, 6 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1 Lawson Rd., Berkeley. 510-525-0302. UUCB.org.

An Evening with Guitar Shastrie Pandit Shankar Prince and Tabalist Mishra Played traditional Hindu music. Thu., July 23, 8 p.m., $15-$20. Yoga Mandala, 2807 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-486-1066. YogaMandalaBerkeley.com.

LGBT Meditation Group Vipassana meditation practice. E-mail [illegible] to [illegible]. Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m., free. East Bay Meditation Center, 2147 Broadway Ave., Oakland. 510-268-0696. EastBayMeditation.org.

Meditation, Dharma Talk and Beginner's Night Weekend Yes, 7-9 p.m., free. Empty Gate Zen Center, 2200 Parker St., Berkeley. 510-845-2734.

Personal Theology Seminars Guest speakers every week. Sundays, 9:30-10:30 a.m., free. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1 Lawson Rd., Berkeley. 510-525-0302. UUCB.org.

YOGA & BODYWORK

InterPlay as a Life Practice Cynthia Winton-Henry and other InterPlay leaders lead an ongoing class on moving, breathing, improvising, and playing. Fridays, 10-12:30 p.m. $10-$25. InterPlayce, 2273 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-465-2797. InterPlay.org.

Lunchtime Kundalini Yoga Thursdays, 12-1:00 p.m. Continues through Sept. 30. Free. Tolman Shack Conference Room, Sproul Hall (UC Berkeley), Berkeley.

Tai Chi, Meditation, and Qigong With Jeffrey Kessler. Thursdays, 7 p.m. $60-$70 per month. Chowhaus Kaiser, 2215 Prince St., Berkeley. 510-704-0661. [illegible] .org.

Yoga for Kids Two workshops led by Rebecca Burke Smith. Thursdays, 3:30 & 4:30 p.m. Continues through Aug. 26. $45 per month. Hot Body Fitness Studio, 665 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro. HotBody-Fitness.com ●

PICKS

Qigong and Mindful Living Workshop

Berkeley [illegible] Healing workshops [illegible] 86. Chau Yoder has studied with the world-famous Buddhist masters Thich Nhat Hanh and Jon Kabat-Zinn, among others. At the **El Cerrito Library** (6510 Stockton Ave., El Cerrito) on Thursday, July 23, Yoder teaches **Qigong and Mindful Living techniques** said to promote health, happiness, and understanding. 7 p.m., free. CCCLib.org *— Anneli Rufus*

TaKeTiNa Workshop

You [illegible] The **TaKeTiNa** process of "rhythmic meditation" uses the natural rhythm within all human beings to create brain-body feedback, which facilitates deep relaxation and heightened awareness. Find that inner beat at a three-hour workshop at the **Rhythm and Sound Space** (1125 Colusa Ave., Berkeley) on Saturday, July 25, 2:45 p.m., $20-$30. RhythminAction.com *— A.R.*

Psychic Fair and Healing Festival

Is [illegible] revealed in your hand? Is your state of health manifested by rays of light surrounding your body? Can cards lead you in the right relationship? At **Classroom Matters** (2436 Sacramento St., Berkeley) on Saturday, July 25, and Sunday, July 26, the Berkeley Psychic Institute's **Psychic Fair and Healing Festival** features palm, aura, and Tarot readings. 1 p.m., $10. BerkeleyPsychic.com *— A.R.*

Berkeley Higashi Honganji Temple Bazaar

Although less familiar in the United States than Zen, Jodo

Shinshu, or "Pure Land" Buddhism, is Japan's most popular type, having been practiced there for more than 800 years. It's been practiced for 63 years at the **Berkeley Higashi Honganji Temple** (1524 Oregon St., Berkeley), whose **Summer Bazaar** on Saturday, July 25, and Sunday, July 26, includes food, crafts, games, and more. Noon, free. BOMBH.org *— A.R.*

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AQUARIUM AGE

A DECEPTIVELY SIMPLE WEEK

For the week of July 22-28, 2009

By Raffee Finn

Waves of emotion continue to break upon the shores of daily life, so don't be surprised if you find yourself experiencing strong, maybe even disproportionate or inappropriate, reactions to certain situations. We are in the immediate wake of the July 21 Solar Eclipse, which means unconscious concerns are continuing to overshadow conscious ones, and regular routines continue to be disrupted by interference and interruptions. High anxiety is likely for some of us, as previously reliable circumstances turn uncertain. Others may be caught in the undertow of helplessness, swept away by an inexorable current of change that is impervious to resistance. And still more, maybe even most of us, are likely to simply feel overwhelmed by the ongoing dissolution of the status quo. While emotional bodies, yours and others', personal and collective, will try to make sense of what unfolds, it won't be easy finding discernable patterns, which makes it all the more important to remember that sometimes life doesn't make sense and that's the point. So rather than force your way through your feelings, take the time to experience your reactions and then allow that process to facilitate greater awareness.

Other than the complexity of the Solar Eclipse, the week is deceptively simple. No blatantly pernicious influences color the days and nights. That being said, we are at the tail end of a Venus/Saturn square. This is a short-lived interaction that's been operating since July 17 and stays operative until July 26. Venus symbolizes love, Saturn represents limitation, and their combined influence tends to signal a hard-heartedness that shows itself through a critical attitude that can never be satisfied with what is. Try not to be too harsh with yourself or others. Remember, Earth is not the planet of perfection. We are also at the beginning of a Sun/Mars sextile, a positive combination that fosters physical vitality.

But the reason the week is "deceptively" simple is that we are still in an eclipse season. There is another Lunar Eclipse on August 5. As we move toward this next Lunar Eclipse we also move into a Mars/Saturn square, a fractious interaction that begins August 1 and continues until August 21. Mars represents the Warrior, Saturn represents limitation, and squares signify irritation that tends to manifest as abrasive interactions. All of which translates into Saturn's determination to restrain that Martian need to take a stand. Of course, Mars is sure to resist Saturn, and that resistance could manifest as violence, individual and collective. Expect you, those you love, and those you don't even know to be hotter under the collar than usual. Also expect self-interest to insinuate itself into all sorts of situations. The positive application of Mars/Saturn contacts is the ability to work hard, with deep concentration, toward specific goals.

As the week unfolds, the key to conscious living is keeping life simple. And while this is easier said than done, it is not impossible, and it will be well worth the effort.

If you know your Ascendant and/or your Moon sign, read that, too.

ARIES Strong words may feel good in the heat of the moment, but that doesn't mean that the momentary satisfaction will be worth the consequences. Keep a cool head, and you'll keep an even keel.

TAURUS Honor the need to replenish your reserves by taking as much quiet time at home as possible. I'm not suggesting you shut out the world, but I am advising you to respect yourself by taking care of yourself.

GEMINI Not taking a stand would be like trying to keep your eyes open when you sneeze. So rather than resist the impulse to take a strong position and hold it, give into that inclination by preparing a well-thought-out argument.

CANCER While it might not be wise to blurt out every opinion, holding will only engender a tape loop of all the things you wished you had said. Let moderation guide you and you'll find a solution.

LEO The only solution is to be authentic — all you, all the time. And if that level of intensity is a problem for others, understand their dilemma, but do not compromise who you are.

VIRGO The challenge is patience in all situations, but particularly in professional interactions with colleagues, associates or clients. While it will be challenging to stay calm, you will be rewarded for your efforts.

LIBRA Avoiding difficult interactions with significant others may not be possible, but that doesn't mean you have to engage in negativity. Stay as neutral as possible and you'll negotiate with skill.

SCORPIO Channeling your creativity into work-related projects will yield better results than just about any other activity. Stay focused on achieving your goals, and you'll be pleased with the results.

SAGITTARIUS It will take a fair degree of discipline to sidestep negative interactions with partners, personal or professional, especially when it comes to money. The best you can do is show up, be honest, and expect the best outcome.

CAPRICORN All work and no play sounds like a recipe for disaster, but not for you. You thrive on difficult tasks that require focus and concentration. So roll up your sleeves and enjoy yourself.

AQUARIUS An abundance of creative energy could spark conflict with significant others who would prefer that you focus your attention on their needs rather than your own. I can't tell you what to do, but when the muse calls, listen.

PISCES Expect a strong desire to hunker down at home, maybe even under the covers, and rest. Resisting this urge will take more energy than you have. So give yourself complete permission to reboot. ●

For More Info

Raffee Finn specializes in Transformational Astrology. For readings, call 1-888-337-9264, write P.O. Box 343, New York, NY 10025, visit AquariumAge.com or e-mail Raffee@AquariumAge.com. Copyright © 2009 by Raffee Finn.

SALUMI, SÌ, BUT ADESSO'S CHARMS ARE MANY

Dopo spin-off combines Italian cold-cuts with fabulous happy-hour spread and informal vibe

By Matthew Stafford

Salumi is the tapas or crème brûlée of the present moment. It seems like every self-respecting Italian eatery in the greater Bay Area has leaped on the dried-and-cured bandwagon over the past year or so, serving up slices of pancetta, prosciutto, salami, and mortadella, and reconfiguring the traditional checkered-tablecloth antipasti platter in the process. At salumerias like Boccalone, Fra Mani, and Baron's, and at such ristoranti as Perbacco in San Francisco and Oliveto and Dopo, the locals have learned to love the spicy, lush, protein-rich pleasures of handcrafted artisan cold cuts. Aged, cured, fat-ribboned meat has of course been around for centuries, usually accessorized with stale breadsticks and a few slices of rubbery mozzarella, but it's only fairly recently that the gourmet version has attained the singular status (and stipend) of raw fish, chocolate truffles, and extra añejo tequila.

Adesso
4395 Piedmont Ave., Oakland. 510-601-0305. Cash, MasterCard, Visa.
Hours: Mon.-Wed. 5 p.m.-midnight,
Thurs.-Sat. 5 p.m.-1 a.m.
No reservations.

Sample Menu

Salumi Misti	$15
Pigeon Pate	$9
Tuna Cruda	$12
Softshell Crab Panini	$13
Honey Lemon Gelato	$7
Provencale Cocktail	$8

Salumi reaches an especially lofty level of respectability at Adesso, a trendy new hangout on Oakland's Piedmont Avenue. Owner Jon Smulewitz (of Dopo) and salumieri extraordinaire Chad Arnold cook up a dizzying array of uniquely spiced bresaola, coppa, lardo, and soppressata that redefines the whole cold-cut concept. There's more to the place than sbriciolona with thyme and pecorino, though. Exotic pâtés and hearty panini and piadine share menu space with a wide range of unique antipasti, the full bar dispenses a dozen inventive cocktails, the all-Italian wine list is a sight to behold, and the venue's snack-laden happy hour is among the Bay Area's most bountiful.

The restaurant's industrial-high-concept interior is blessed with enormous windows, polished parquet floors, and the big-city vibe of a hip and flourishing hotspot. A three-sided counter seats dozens of diners and drinkers, a rather incongruous foosball table is tucked next to a striking, glass-fronted wine cabinet, and the din resulting from all this camaraderie can get, at the very least, distracting. Especially when the narrow back counter is loaded down with that free happy-hour grub and the crowds descend like donkeys at a salt lick.

Ourselves included. Because we aren't talking about Chex Mix but juicy little deep-fried meatballs, fingers of panini oozing with prosciutto and mozzarella, canapés topped with seafood and capers, glistening leafy salads crunchy with sea salt, marinated string beans and pickled olives, and creamy deviled eggs paired with sardines. And surprisingly substantial sandwiches of soft Acme sweet roll and slivers of that house-cured salumi. (You can see the sausages hanging in a case alongside loins and rounds of cured meat.) There are up to forty varieties available on any given day, seasoned with everything from orange blossom honey to wild Calabrian oregano, and the best way to sample a few is by ordering one of the salumi misti platters of three to five varietals. The Sicilia misti features two subtly distinct fennel-accented Sicilian style sausages, the titular *adesso* (flavored with whole Sicilian fennel seeds) and the *finocchiona* (made with

Adesso's forty varieties of cured meat redefine the whole cold-cut concept.

fennel pollen), plus *origano and aglio*, a hard sausage touched with garlic and fresh oregano. All three were a bit chewy, like meat reduced to its textural essence, and boasted a correspondingly lusty intensity. Another salume, extra-lean *bresaola*, is one of the few crafted from beef instead of pork. Air-dried until tender, it was a delicate, paper-thin, peppery treat.

There's an equally impressive selection of pâtés made in house from duck, rabbit, chicken, pigeon, and other wildlife. The pigeon was our favorite, a rich, creamy mousse reminiscent of goose liver pâté with hints of cippolini onion and sun-dried tomato. The rabbit had a coarser, more rustic texture but was surprisingly bland. Buttery rounds of lightly toasted Acme sourdough accompanied. Another antipasto, tuna *cruda*, featured chunks of cool, luscious raw tuna combined with fresh basil and bits of roasted tomato served on rounds of warm chickpea flour polenta — a marvelous and inventive combination of tastes and textures.

Piadina (griddled flatbread) is a popular street food back in Italy, and at Adesso it's rolled and stuffed with a variety of fillings and served as a hearty snack. After all that meat product we opted for the vegetarian version, in which diced al dente zucchini, sweet grilled red onion, and molten mozzarella melted together into a warm, toasty, satisfying mini meal. The kitchen also grills up several panini, one of which, the *crostone* of tuna confit with lemon and mint, tasted like a glorified and perfectly adequate tuna salad sandwich. A more delectable choice was the hot soft-shell crab *panino*, in which the crustacean's sweet, briny, crunchy character clashed deliciously with its pillowy roll, garlicky aioli, and snappy watercress.

Desserts include a small selection of cheeses, including *brescianella stagionata*, a soft, slightly pungent cow's milk *formaggio* served with sweet and silky fresh figs. You can also get a rather dry and endorphin-free flourless chocolate cake, or (a better bet) one of the rich, chewy housemade *gelati* — the creamy, butterscotch-y hazelnut, or our favorite, the positively Proustian Sicilian lemon honey.

The wine list offers a virtual tippler's tour up and down the boot of Italy, with a remarkable selection of 100-plus vintages from just about every region. Other sipping options include aperitifs, digestifs, dessert wines, and grappas, and a dozen unique house cocktails. We were especially taken with the Pesca, a summery, eye-opening concoction of peach brandy, peach bitters, and peach-infused bourbon, and the slightly subtler Provençale, a floral, sun-kissed, absolutely bracing glass of lavender-infused gin, *herbes de Provence*-infused vermouth, and a hint of Cointreau. Very nice enjoyed at the bar with a platter of first-class nibbles, three dozen salumi waiting in the wings. ●

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Evelyn Hoi Poi Poi 3288 Pierce St. (in the Pacific East Mall), Richmond, 510-524-[illegible] (Chinese) $-$$

[illegible] Chinese Restaurant 3288A Pierce St. (in the Pacific East Mall), Richmond, 510-527-[illegible] (Chinese/Seafood) $-$$$

Little Angel's [illegible] Potrero Ave., El Cerrito, 510-232-[illegible] (Steak House) $$-$$$

Marylou's Homemade [illegible] 1572 Sycamore Ave., Suite F, Hercules, 510-745-[illegible] (Tiquer) $

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Suirung Thai 3288 Pierce St. #[illegible] (in the Pacific East Mall), Richmond, 510-558-0151 (Southeast Asian/Thai/Seafood) $

[illegible] Thai Restaurant 12290 San Pablo Ave., Richmond, 510-232-5942 (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $-$$

[illegible] 1501 Sycamore Ave., Unit F (in the Creekside Center), Hercules, 510-245-5000 (Japanese/Sushi) $$

Tacos Los Señores Parking lot of 550 23rd St., Richmond, (Mexican) $

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Al's Big Burger 437 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-521-[illegible] (Diner) $

[illegible] Hamburgers 1591 Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-526-8185 (American/Burgers/Sandwiches) $

[illegible] Loung 1180 Solano Ave., Albany, 510-527-8866 (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $

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Pi[illegible] Meridian 1580 Oak Ave., Albany, 510-525-1350 (French/Organic/Sustainable) $$-$$$

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Amanda's 2122 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-2222 (American/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Andy and Cindy's Thai Cuisine Berkeley Saturday Farmers' Market (Center St. at Martin Luther King Jr. Way), Berkeley, 510-[illegible] (Organic/Sustainable/Thai/Burmese/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Angeline's Louisiana Kitchen 2261 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-6900 (Southern/Soul Food) $-$$

Bobby G's Pizzeria 2072 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-665-8866 (Organic/Sustainable/Pizza) $-$$

Brazil Fresh Berkeley Cafe 2161 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-8011 (Brazilian/South American) $

Chaat Cafe 1902 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-1431 (Indian/Pakistani/Tapas/Small Plates) $

Jayakarta 2026 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian) $-$$

Looney's Smokehouse 2120 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible] (Barbecue) $-$$

Plearn Thai Dining 1923 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1866 (Thai/Burmese) $-$$

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[illegible] 2042 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-704-0220 (Central American) $-$$

Thai Delight Cuisine 1700 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-549-0611 (Organic/Sustainable/Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $-$$

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Berkeley Paradise 2101 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-665-4389 (African) $$

Udupi Palace 1901 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-843-6600 (Indian/Pakistani/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

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900 Grayson 900 Grayson St., Berkeley, 510-704-9900 (California Cuisine) $$

Anchalee 1094 [illegible] Dwight Way, Berkeley, 510-848-4015 (Thai/Burmese) $$

Bette's Oceanview Diner 1807 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-644-3230 (American/[illegible]) $

Acme Bread Restaurant 1398 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-664-9100 (Bakery/California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $

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Miyozen 4147 40th St., Emeryville, 510-923-9304 (Japanese/Sushi) $$

Priya Indian Cuisine 2072 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-644-3877 (Indian/Pakistani) $$

Sketch 1996A Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-665-5650 (Dessert/Ice Cream) $

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Adagia 2700 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, 510-647-2300 (California Cuisine/Organic/[illegible]

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RECENTLY REVIEWED

Lake Anza Beach Club

At Lake Anza in Tilden Park, 510-843-[illegible]. [illegible] post Food-Network world. Festooned with blow-up beach toys, Mr. and Mrs. Potato-Head toys, and vintage outdoor photographs, Lake Anza Beach Club stands mere blocks from the Gourmet Ghetto — albeit vertical blocks. So from its two takeout-only windows — one inside the lake's paid zone and the other outside, adjoining the parking lot — come chili, sandwiches, and coffee drinks using locally sourced and in many cases sustainably grown ingredients. Also here are snack-bar standards such as nachos, hot dogs, and soft ice cream. Head honchos here are Daniel Bergerac and Eddie Lundeen, who created Point Isabel's popular Mudpuppy's Tub & Scrub and Sit and Stay Cafe. $

La Furia Chalaca

310 Broadway (at Third St.), Oakland, 510-451-4206. Classic dishes from Peru's mountains and coastline are inherently tasty, prepared and artistically presented at this Jack London Square destination. Causa (puréed potatoes filled with spicy chicken) makes an excellent starter; the house ceviche is bright, lush, and impeccably fresh; seco de cabrito (braised goat) is a rich, hearty, satisfying meal. Sipping options include a potent Pisco Sour, the refreshing chicha morada purple-corn punch, and an impressive Peru-centric wine list. Lovely array of pre-Columbian pottery. $$$

The Mayflower

2156 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-883-9788. Almost every dish in this place is packed with so much protein that you're primed to pop up from your chair and hike from here to San Leandro. It's that good, and yes, it's a hole-in-the-wall. It's about to be your favorite hole-in-the-wall, because dim sum is served here all day every day — and because its menu sports 190 separate items denoting a whirlwind tour of regional and culinary styles, from rock-and-clay pot to squash with duck eggs to shrimp in lobster sauce to happy-family tofu to dried-fish-and-peanut jook. And that's not counting the 47 lunch specials, which include such rarities as ginger lamb, seaweed salad (as an entrée!), and lemongrass pork chop. And that's not counting a separate 57-item vegetarian menu, of which we the meatless need read only as far as fake-chicken drumsticks and fake-chicken winter-melon soup before swooning dead away. And that's not counting daily specials. Or desserts. $

Bellanico

4238 Park Blvd., Oakland, 510-336-1180. This Glenview neighborhood hangout prepares and serves mostly exemplary and always inventive Italian dishes in a warm and convivial setting. Begin your meal with the startlingly good gorgonzola panna cotta or a platter of commendable Sicilian pasta with sweet onions, dandelion greens and milk-braised goat. The grilled pork chop with cheeses and pickled rhubarb is a marvelous entree, and don't miss the tangy sheep cheesecake or the hazelnut chocolate-date pudding for dessert. Unusual and impressive (primarily Italian) wine list. $$$

Azerbaijan Restaurant

2175 Allston Way, Berkeley, 510-704-[illegible]. Owner David Dorns, who also owns Albert's around the block, hails from Tabriz, the capital of Iran's East Azerbaijan Province. Azeri dishes look, feel, and largely even taste Persian, but involve more nuts, chickpeas, tomatoes, potatoes, saffron, fried onions, and fresh and dried fruit. For instance, the fesenjoon, the pomegranate-walnut stew that is the Caucasian answer to mole sauce, is a little sweeter and smoother here than in typical Persian restaurants. Azerbaijan reveres rice, so this place proves. Choose baghali polo, with melt-in-your-mouth baby lima beans and lots of dill. Or zereshk polo with saffron and sweet-sharp red barberries. Or best of all, tears-in-your-eyes shirin polo with saffron, raisins, preserved orange peel, pistachios, and almonds. $$

Zen

2315 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda, 510-521-7070. Zen's eclectic fusion cuisine encompasses Chinese, Hawaiian, Korean, Italian, and Japanese cooking traditions with unfocused-brain and mixed success. The spaghetti with enoki mushrooms and fish roe and the kimchi ribs and fried rice are apt examples of comfort food, and the vermicelli with roast duck and mango is a sweet and savory treat, but the chicken gizzard yakitori and the panko-crusted fish and chips are best avoided. Desserts are on the hotel-banquet level, but the mango sorbet is a nice tangy meal-closer. Impressive array of soju and sake cocktails; handsome low-key red-and-black ambience. $$

Sustainable) $$$

Andy and Cindy's Thai Cuisine Sunday Berkeley Farmers' Market (Derby St. at Martin Luther King Jr. Way), Berkeley, 510-548-3333 (Organic/Sustainable/Thai/Burmese/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

[illegible] India 2448 Sacramento St., Berkeley, 510-548-7884. (Indian/Pakistani/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

Crixa Cakes 2748 Adeline St., Berkeley, 510-548-0421 (Bakery/Cafe/Coffeehouse) $-$$

[illegible] Restaurant 2556 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-[illegible] (Japanese/Sushi) $$-$$$

Paragon Bar & Cafe 41 Tunnel Rd. (Claremont Resort and Spa), Berkeley, 510-549-8585 (American/California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$$

Sweet Russell Bakeshop 3250 [illegible] St., Berkeley, 510-[illegible] (Bakery/Cafe/Coffeehouse) $-$$

Top Dog 2534 Durant Ave., Berkeley, 510-843-5967 (American/Burgers/Sandwiches/Organic/Sustainable) $

Vault Cafe 3250 [illegible] St., Berkeley, 510-[illegible] (American/Breakfast/Brunch/California Cuisine) $-$$

[illegible] 1511 [illegible] St., Berkeley, 510-843-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $

OAKLAND-ROCKRIDGE

À Côté 5478 College Ave., Oakland, 510-655-6469 (California Cuisine/French/Italian/Organic/Sustainable/Spanish/Tapas/Small Plates) $$$

Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers 5819 College Ave., Oakland, 510-601-0444 (American/Burgers/Sandwiches) $

Cactus Taqueria 5642 College Ave., Oakland, 510-658-6180 (Mexican/Organic/Sustainable) $

Citron 5484 College Ave., Oakland, 510-653-5484 (Breakfast/Brunch/California Cuisine/French) $$$-$$$$

[illegible] of India 5311 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible] (Indian/Pakistani) $$

Garibaldi's 5356 College Ave., Oakland, 510-595-4000 (California Cuisine/Tapas/Small Plates) $$$

[illegible] 3711 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible] (Japanese/Sushi) $$-$$$

Somerset 5912 College Ave., Oakland, 510-428-9823 (American/Breakfast/Brunch/California Cuisine) $$

Top Dog 5190 Broadway (inside [illegible] Depot), Oakland, 510-601-1187 (American/Burgers/Sandwiches/Organic/Sustainable) $

Uzen 5415 College Ave., Oakland, 510-654-7753 (Japanese/Sushi) $$

Wood Tavern 6317 College Ave., Oakland, 510-654-6607 (California Cuisine) $$-$$$

Zachary's Chicago Pizza 5801 College Ave., Oakland, 510-655-6385 (Pizza) $-$$

OAKLAND-TEMESCAL

Addis Ethiopian Restaurant 6100 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-653-3456 (African/Ethiopian/Eritrean) $$

Andy and Cindy's Thai Cuisine Sunday Temescal Farmers' Market, Oakland, 415-812-1130 (Organic/Sustainable/Thai/Burmese/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Aunt Mary's Cafe 4307 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-601-9227 (American/Breakfast/Brunch/Southern/Soul Food) $-$$

Bakesale Betty 5098 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-985-1213 (Bakery/Cafe/Coffeehouse) $-$$

Barlata 4901 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-450-0678 (Spanish/Tapas/Small Plates/Wine Bar) $$$

[illegible] 5090 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $

[illegible] Restaurant 3905 [illegible]way, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Korean) $$-$$$

Pizzaiolo 5008 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-652-4888 (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable/Pizza) $$-$$$

[illegible] Barbeque House [illegible] Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-834-[illegible] (Korean)

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WINEAU

Savoring Sauvignon Blanc

It may not be everyone's favorite grape, but it's hard to beat when you're craving a crisp summer white

I recently learned that one of my editors ranks among those seemingly open and unbiased Wineaux who secretly harbors a strong aversion to a certain varietal. In fact, said editor has confessed to such a strong dislike for Sauvignon Blanc that when he recently drank — and enjoyed — a French Sancerre, he was chagrined to learn that Sancerres are in fact 100 percent Sauvignon Blanc.

It was just his sort that Robert Mondavi had in mind back in the 1960s, when he renamed the grape Fumé Blanc and suddenly started doing big business with the same wine whose sales previously had been paltry. In contrast, Cockerell Family Wine Estates of Napa proudly bears the varietal's name on its bottle — in fact, Sauvignon Blanc is all they produce — but even the Cockerells have gone Francophile in the naming of their brand: Coquerel. Made from estate-grown Calistoga grapes, the **2008 Le Petit Coquerel Sauvignon Blanc** is hardly a bargain at **$22.50**, but it is infused with the melony bouquet for which northern Napa Sauvignon Blancs are known, with notes of tropical fruit and white peaches thrown in for good measure and tons more melon and citrus on the palate.

The **2006 Verve Sauvignon Blanc ($10)**, an offering from the East Bay's own Aubin Cellars, is actually made from grapes grown in Aubin's Villa San Juliette vineyard in Paso Robles. Like Le Petit Coquerel, it's aged in stainless steel — the better to avoid masking the varietal's famous bouquet with oak — but its pleasantly herbaceous aroma was a bit muted. Light with a bit of sweetness on the palate, the overall impression the Verve left was of a tart little wine that would be just the thing — though some may call it sacrilege — to use in a white-wine spritzer. It definitely lived up to the Central Coast's reputation for producing Sauvignon Blancs with strongly "grassy" flavors.

Aubin Cellars will be pouring wines from their Verve line on Thursday, July 23, from 5 to 7 p.m. at Franklin Square Wine Bar as part of the wine bar's $1 Thursday wine-tasting series. For $1, you can taste everything that week's winery has chosen to offer at the event — and bottles can be purchased at retail prices. With Aubin Cellars already offering some of the best value wines produced locally (we've especially liked past vintages of their Syrah and French Colombard), the event becomes a triple threat: cheap, locavore-friendly, and a pleasant place to drink outdoors.

Franklin Square Wine Bar is located at 2212 Broadway in Oakland. Aubin Cellars, also based in Oakland, will be participating in the 4th Annual Urban Wine Experience held in Jack London Square on August 8. For more information, visit EastBayVintners.com.

Blair Campbell

For retail availability, visit EastBayExpress.com

R&C

$-$$

[illegible] [illegible] Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-653-[illegible] (Asian/[illegible]) $$$

Yet Hai Zo Zang 4298 Telegraph Ave., Suite B, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Chinese/Korean) $

[illegible] 3913 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Chinese/Korean) $

OAKLAND-PIEDMONT, GRAND LAKE & EAST

Andy and Cindy's Thai Cuisine Saturday Grand Lake Farmers' Market, Oakland, 415-417-[illegible] (Organic/[illegible] Thai/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers 4162 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-655-[illegible] (American/Burgers/Sandwiches) $

Bay Wolf Restaurant 3853 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-655-6004 (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$$

[illegible] 4218 Park Blvd., Oakland, 510-336-1100 (Breakfast/Brunch/Italian/Organic/Sustainable/Wine Bar) $$$

Blackberry Bistro 4240 Park Blvd., Oakland, 510-336-1088 (Breakfast/Brunch/Southern/Soul Food) $-$$

Camino 3917 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-547-5035 (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$$

César Piedmont 4039 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-883-0222 (Spanish/Tapas/Small Plates) $$

[illegible] 3306 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (California Cuisine) $$$-$$$$

[illegible] 3318 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Japanese/Sushi) $$

[illegible] 4001B Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (French) $-$$

[illegible] Barbecue/Restaurant 4301 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-428-1232 (African/[illegible]/Caribbean) $

[illegible] 3401 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland, 510-663-2500 (California/Organic/Vegan/Sustainable) $$-$$$$

Z Cafe and Bar 2735 Broadway, Oakland, 510-663-2599 (American/Breakfast/Brunch/California Cuisine) $$

OAKLAND-DOWNTOWN & JACK LONDON SQ.

[illegible] [illegible], Oakland, 510-[illegible] (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$

[illegible] 828 14th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Organic/Sustainable/Southeast Asian/Thai/Vietnamese) $

Breads of India [illegible] Clay St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Indian/Pakistani) $-$$

[illegible] [illegible] Clay St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $-$$$

Cock-A-Doodle Cafe 719 Washington St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (American/Breakfast/Brunch/Cafe/Coffeehouse/California Cuisine/Nuevo Latino/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

[illegible] 1155 3rd St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southern/Soul Food) $$

Shanghai Restaurant 930 Webster St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Chinese) $-$$

[illegible] Bistro 490 Broadway, Oakland, 510-251-8100 (California Cuisine) $$$

[illegible] 388 9th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Chinese) $

[illegible] 485 8th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Mexican/Tapas/Small Plates) $$

[illegible] 499 9th St., Suite 11, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (American/Burgers/Sandwiches/Organic/Sustainable) $

Uncle Willie's Bar-B-Que and Fish 614 14th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Barbecue) $-$$

[illegible] 510 Embarcadero West, Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Japanese/Sushi) $$$

[illegible] Restaurant 366 Webster St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Chinese) $

ALAMEDA

[illegible] 1544 Webster St., Alameda, 510-523-2220 (Italian) $$$

[illegible] [illegible] Island Dr., Suite D2, Alameda, 510-[illegible] (Japanese/Sushi) $-$$

Bistro 2000 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (California Cuisine/Greek/Turkish/Organic/Sustainable) $$

[illegible] 2369 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda, 510-521-[illegible] (California Cuisine) $$$

[illegible] 2104 Encinal Ave., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (Vietnamese) $-$$

La Piñata 1440 Park St., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $$

[illegible] 2318A Encinal Ave., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (American/Breakfast/Brunch/California Cuisine) $-$$

[illegible] [illegible] Webster St., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (Brewpub/English/Irish/New Zealander/Organic/Sustainable) $

[illegible] 1501 Park St., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (American/Breakfast/Brunch/Diner) $

[illegible] 1916 Webster St., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $

Pappo 2320 Central Ave., Alameda, 510-337-9100 (California Cuisine) $$$

OAKLAND-EAST

[illegible] 2102 8th Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Cambodian/Laotian/Southeast Asian/Thai/Vietnamese) $

La Estrellita Cafe 446 East 12th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (American/Mexican) $$

New [illegible] 831 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $-$$

Old [illegible] Village [illegible] International Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Thai/Vietnamese) $$

[illegible] 2912 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Cambodian/Laotian/Southeast Asian) $

[illegible] 2211 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $-$$

[illegible] 1720 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $

Taqueria [illegible] 2538 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $

Taqueria [illegible] 4347 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $

HAYWARD & SAN LEANDRO

A [illegible] Cafe 1213 A St., Hayward, 510-582-[illegible] (French) $$$

[illegible] [illegible] Mission Blvd., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (Italian) $-$$

Buffalo Bills [illegible] 1082 B St., Hayward, 510-886-[illegible] (American/Brewpub) $

[illegible] Bar-B-Q Restaurant 2238 Mission Blvd., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (Barbecue/Korean) $

[illegible] Restaurant 2901 [illegible] Rd., Castro Valley, 510-[illegible] (Chinese) $

L&L Hawaiian Barbecue 27320 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (Barbecue/Hawaiian) $

La Finca 966 [illegible] St., Hayward, 510-538-[illegible] (Mexican) $$

La Piñata 1092 [illegible] St., San Leandro, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $$

[illegible] 27300 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (Filipino/Southeast Asian) $$$

The Medicine [illegible] 925 B St., Hayward, 510-538-[illegible] (American/Brewery/Pub) $

[illegible] Restaurant 1292 [illegible] St., San Leandro, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $$-$$$

Thai [illegible] 1376 E 14th St., San Leandro, 510-351-2345 (Southeast Asian/Thai/Japanese) $-$$

[illegible] Burgers 2115 [illegible] St., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (American/Burgers) $

[illegible] 217 Parrott St., San Leandro, 510-[illegible] (Vietnamese) $$

Yet Hai Zo Zang 32538 Foothill Blvd., Hayward, 510-[illegible] (Chinese/Korean) $

FREMONT, NEWARK & UNION CITY

Cafe [illegible] 45077 Warm Springs Blvd., Fremont, 510-[illegible] (Chinese) $-$$$

[illegible] 3954 [illegible] Ave., Fremont, 510-790-[illegible] (Indian/Pakistani/Tapas/Small Plates) $-$$

[illegible] [illegible] Rd., Union City, 510-[illegible] (Chinese) $

[illegible] 33330 Alvarado Niles Rd., Union City, 510-[illegible] (Indian/Pakistani) $-$$

[illegible] Afghan [illegible] 37405 Fremont Blvd., Fremont, 510-[illegible] (Afghan/Middle Eastern) $-$$

[illegible] Restaurant 3906 Washington Blvd., Fremont, 510-[illegible] (Kosher/Halal/Middle Eastern) $-$$

L&L Hawaiian Barbecue [illegible] (in the [illegible] City Marketplace), [illegible] City, 510-[illegible] (Barbecue/Hawaiian) $

[illegible] 40000 Fremont Blvd., Fremont, 510-[illegible] (Indian/Pakistani/Pizza) $

PLEASANT HILL, CONCORD & EAST

[illegible] [illegible] Crow Canyon Rd., Danville, 925-[illegible] (Peruvian/South American) $-$$

[illegible] 1800 Monument Blvd., Concord, 925-[illegible] (Afghan/Persian) $

[illegible] 1825 Sutter St., Ste. C, Concord, 925-[illegible] (Eastern European/German/Austrian) $$

El [illegible] Brewing Company and Barbecue 2[illegible] San Ramon Valley Blvd., [illegible], Danville, 925-[illegible] (American/Brewpub) $-$$

Hollywood Pizza, Pasta & Wine 1585 B Galindo St., Concord, 925-[illegible] (Italian/Pizza) $

L&L Hawaiian Barbecue [illegible] Lone Tree Way #120, Brentwood, 925-[illegible] (Barbecue/Hawaiian) $

L&L Hawaiian Barbecue 600 Crescent Dr., Pleasant Hill, 925-[illegible] (Barbecue/Hawaiian) $

La [illegible] 2301 Willow Pass Rd., Concord, 925-[illegible] (Mexican) $$

La Tavola 2151 Salvio St., Ste. I (in Salvio Pacheco Sq.), Concord, 925-[illegible] (Italian) $$-$$$

Lucy's Asia Bistro 2500-A Sand Creek Rd. (in the Sand Creek Crossing mall), Brentwood, 925-[illegible] (Asian Fusion/Chinese/Japanese/Sushi) $$-$$$

[illegible] Restaurant 2118 Willow Pass Rd., Concord, 925-[illegible] (Italian) $$-$$$

Nibblers Eatery & Wine Bar 1922 Oak Park Blvd., Pleasant Hill, 925-944-[illegible] (Tapas/Small Plates/Wine Bar) $$-$$$

WALNUT CREEK

[illegible] Deli & Restaurant 1615 Newell Ave., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible] (Eastern European) $$

[illegible] 1342 [illegible] Plaza, Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible] (American/Steak House) $$$$

La [illegible] 1608 N. Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible] (French/Organic/Sustainable) $$$

Breads of India 1358 N. Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-256-[illegible] (Indian/Pakistani/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

[illegible] [illegible] Bonanza St., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible] (Chinese) $-$$

[illegible] 1491 [illegible] Ave., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible] (Greek) $

[illegible] 1550 Bonanza St., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible] (California Cuisine/Cuban/Nuevo Latino) $$

[illegible] 1513 Locust St., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible] (Vietnamese) $$

[illegible] 1252 [illegible] Way, Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible] (Italian) $

[illegible] [illegible] N. Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible] (Chinese) $$

The Original [illegible] 1491 S. Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible] (Breakfast/Brunch/Diner) $$

LAMORINDA

[illegible] Cafe 2 Theatre Sq., Suite 105, Orinda, 925-254-[illegible] (Greek/Turkish/Middle Eastern) $

[illegible] 3422 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-283-[illegible] (European/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

[illegible] 21 Orinda Way, Orinda, 925-254-[illegible] (American/Steak House) $$-$$$

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El Jarro Mexican Cafe 3583 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. 925-283-6809 (Mexican) $-$$

La Finestra Ristorante 100 Lafayette Circle, Suite 101, Lafayette. 925-284-5202 (Italian) $$-$$$

Lily's House 3556 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. 925-284-7500 (Chinese) $$-$$$

Pizza Antica 3600 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. 925-299-0500 (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable/Pizza) $$-$$$

Vino 3538 Plaza Way, Lafayette. 925-284-1330 (Italian/Spanish/Tapas/Small Plates) $$

TRI-VALLEY

Blue Agave Club 625 Main St., Pleasanton. 925-417-1224 (Mexican) $$$

Boone's House & Brew 3522 Main St., [illegible] 925-837-8821 (American/Southern) $$-$$$

Bridges Restaurant and Bar 44 Church St., Danville. 925-820-7200 (Asian Fusion/California Cuisine) $$$-$$$$

Los Caporales 2120 First St., Livermore. 925-443-4456 (Mexican) $

Hap's Original 122 W. Neal St., Pleasanton. 925-600-9200. (American/Steakhouse) $$$

Lawrence's Market/Stand Meat Co. 225-B Alamo Plaza, Alamo. 925-838-0580 (Barbecue/Deli) $

Masala Indian Fusion 498 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Danville. 925-388-4800 (Indian/Pakistani) $$

The Patio 960 Moraga Rd., Lafayette. 925-299-8585 (South American/Tapas/Small Plates) $$

Patrick David's 416 Sycamore Valley Rd. W., Danville. 925-838-7611. (Asian Fusion/California Cuisine) $$$

The Peasant & the Pear 267 Hartz Ave. (in the Danville Creek Center) Danville. 925-820-6611 (California Cuisine) $$-$$$

Sergio's Trattoria 500 Bollinger Canyon Way (in the Canyon Lakes Mall), San Ramon. 925-866-1958. (Italian) $$-$$$

Shiraz 21314 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon. 925-829-5558 (Middle Eastern/Persian) $$

Uncle Yu's at the Vineyard 39 S. Livermore Ave., Livermore. 925-449-7000 (Chinese) $$-$$$

Xenia Bistro 115 Alamo Plaza, Alamo. 925-855-9060. (California Cuisine/Eastern European) $$

Yokaka 3496 B Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville. 925-964-3050. (Japanese/Sushi) $$-$$$

Zachary's Chicago Pizza 3110 Crow Canyon Pl., Suite D, San Ramon. 925-244-1222 (Pizza) $-$$ ●

FOOD & WINE

CULINARY & WINE

$5 Wine Tastings All wines available in retail prices. Thursdays, 5-7 p.m. Continuous through July 30. $5. Franklin Square Wine Bar, 2212 Broadway, Oakland. 510-288-6400. FSWineBar.com.

Amanda's Restaurant Two Year Anniversary With complementary organic cookies until 2 p.m., baked fries from 2-4 p.m., organic apple fries from 4-6 p.m. and freshly made sodas 6-8 p.m. Sat., July 25, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Amanda's, 2122 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-548-2122. Amandas.com

BurgerMeister One-Year Anniversary Celebration Buy one burger and get a second burger free, plus $1 draft beers. Wed., July 22, 2-8 p.m. BurgerMeister, 2319 Central Ave., Alameda.

City Chickens Workshop with urban farmer Novella Carpenter teaches participants how to raise chickens for eggs and a nitrogen source. Sun., July 26, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. $25. Biofuel Oasis, 1441 Fourth St., Berkeley.

Biodynamic Beer Tasting With Michael Gripp of Epic Wines. Sat., July 25, 3-6 p.m. $10. MarketCellars, 1580 Solano Ave., Berkeley. 510-525-3400.

La Mozza la Formaggio: A.G. Ferrari Mini Burrata Cheese Sample burrata from Emilio Romagna, Lombardia, and Liguria at A.G. Ferrari Foods in North Berkeley (1?4 Ave.), Lafayette (23 Lafayette Circle), Montclair Village, San Leandro (14234 Catalina St.), & Piedmont Ave (4001 Piedmont Ave). Sun., July 26, 2-4 p.m. A.G. Ferrari Foods, 2905 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2701.

Organic & Biodynamic Wine Tasting Sat., July 25, 3:30-5:30 p.m. Free. Vintage Wines College Ave., 2949 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-549-2500.

Organic Wine Thursday: Wines of Dry Creek Valley Thu., July 23, 4-7 p.m. Free. Vintage Berkeley Wine Shop, 2113 Vine St., Berkeley. 510-665-8600.

Vegetarian Cooking Class: Beans, Greens, Squash, Market With Colleen Patrick-Goudreau. Sat., July 25, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. $55. First Unitarian Church of Oakland, 685 14th St., Oakland. 510-531-9629. uuoakland.org.

FARMERS' MARKETS

Alameda Farmers' Market Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Webster St. at Haight Ave., Alameda. 510-747-7510.

Bayfair Mall Farmers' Market Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Bayfair Center, 15555 E. 14th St., San Leandro. 510-357-6000. ShopBayfair.com.

Farm Fresh Market Community Farm Stand Wednesdays, 3-6:30 p.m. 510-845-4104. EcologyCenter.org. Frances Albrier Community Center, San Pablo Park, 2800 Park St., Berkeley. 510-981-5150.

Kaiser Permanente Oakland Farmers' Market Fridays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Kaiser Oakland, 3600 Howe St., Oakland.

Kaiser Permanente Union City Farmers' Market Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Kaiser Medical Center, Union City, 3553 Whipple Rd., Union City.

Kensington Farmers' Market Sundays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. ACE Hardware Parking Lot, 303 Arlington Ave., Berkeley.

Laurel District Farmers' Market Fridays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Laurel District Farmers' Market. 510-967-1285.

North Berkeley Farmers' Market Thursdays, 3-7 p.m. 510-548-3333. EcologyCenter.org. Shattuck Ave. at Rose St., Berkeley.

Saturday Berkeley Farmers' Market Saturdays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. 510-548-3333. EcologyCenter.org. MLK Civic Center Park, 2151 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley. 510-981-6700.

Temescal Farmers' Market Sundays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. DMV Parking Lot, 5300 Claremont Ave., Oakland.

Tuesday Berkeley Farmers' Market Tuesdays, 2-7 p.m. 510-548-3333. EcologyCenter.org. Derby St. (at Martin Luther King Jr. Way), Berkeley. ●

PICK

Drink for the Cure

Drinking is all well and good, but it's even better when it might save lives. During a **fund-raiser party** at family-run **Grand Tavern** (3601 Grand Ave., Oakland) on Thursday, July 23, $1 from the price of every drink purchased will benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. A raffle with many prizes is another part of the fund-raiser. 6 p.m. GrandTavern.net
— *Anneli Rufus*

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Local Food View:
Making Sense of Eco-labels

Fair trade, organic, local, naturally-grown — the claims made by our food producers seem to be multiplying daily. An eco-label's credibility depends on several factors: it should be verified by an independent organization, and it should be based on standards set by a combination of nonprofits, farmers, and industry.

Some of the better eco labels include "Organic," "Fair Trade," "Certified Humane Raised & Handled," and Monterey Bay Aquarium's "Seafood Watch Guide." But if you're buying locally grown produce direct from the farmer you can always ask about their growing practices, even if they're not certified "Organic." And you might be surprised: often smaller farmers would meet the various standards but can't afford to pay the certification fees.

FAIR TRADE CERTIFIED

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CULTURE NOSH

The Jewish Film Festival has something to offend everyone. That's why we love it.

By Kelly Vance

Even in the obsessively multicultural Bay Area, the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival sets some sort of record for fractious, provocative diversity. That's remarkable for a festival ostensibly devoted to such a narrow swath of humanity, but the notoriously feisty SFJFF has never been restricted by things like tradition or conformity to a received wisdom. Forget that old line about one two Jews having three opinions on a given subject. The Jewish Film Festival, now in its 29th season of stretching cultural boundaries, has at least 71 opinions, one for every film in this year's selection — and each one is unique.

All the other movies in this year's SFJFF are worthwhile, but *Mary and Max* is the one you really have to see. In a year that's shaping up as one of the strongest in recent memory for thought-provoking, grown-up animated features, Australian writer-director Adam Elliot's claymation character study compares favorably to *Coraline*. Years ago, before the Internet was invented, there lived in the suburbs of Melbourne a lonely, awkward eight-year-old girl named Mary Daisy Dinkle (voice of Bethany Whitmore, then Toni Collette). By sheer chance she begins a long-distance correspondence with a similarly adrift 44-year-old man in New York City, Max Jerry Horowitz (Philip Seymour Hoffman), and the film follows their shared emotional ups and downs — mostly downs — over the course of twenty years.

Mary and Max is hardly a feel-gooder, but a warm, reassuring sense of misery-loves-company radiates through the film, thanks to Elliot's visual whimsicality and especially to the voice talents. Hoffman is virtually unrecognizable as the heavily accented Max, an atheist who loves chocolate hot dogs and belongs to Overeaters Anonymous. Mary, who picked Max's name and address at random out of a Manhattan phone book she found in a Melbourne post office, is bullied by practically everyone she knows. So is Max. Best of all is the perfectly pitched narration by Barry Humphreys, aka Dame Edna. *Mary and Max* plays the Castro on July 25, then the Roda on August 4.

Andy Bichlbaum and Mike Bonanno, collectively known as the Yes Men, have made a career and a 2003 movie as anti-corporate guerrilla pranksters with a very serious purpose. In their new documentary *The Yes Men Fix the World*, Bichlbaum and Bonanno refine their technique of "posing as top executives of companies we hate" and publicly embarrassing them. Compared to the crimes committed by the companies in the first place, the Yes Men's pranks are a slight annoyance, but the object is to raise awareness, if only for a few precious minutes at a time before the hoaxes are discovered.

A reassuring sense of misery-loves-company radiates through Mary and Max.

The lead target in the new doc is Dow Chemical, which is balking at remediating the lingering ill effects of the 1984 pesticide plant leak in Bhopal, India that killed hundreds, perhaps thousands, and continues to endanger the lives of nearby residents. Bichlbaum and Bonanno set up a dummy web site then waited until they were invited, as Dow representatives, to a London conference on "acceptable risk." As a prop, they brought along a golden skeleton and a rationalization that substituted "other people's lives" for the familiar "other people's money." The kicker was when Bichlbaum announced that Dow would clean up the Bhopal site and compensate all the victims fairly, after years of denial. That news caused Dow's stock to lose $2 billion in 23 minutes.

Bichlbaum and Bonanno get away with it because they're articulate and look the part. Their main point: "If we keep putting the market in the driver's seat, it could happily drive the whole planet off a cliff." *The Yes Men Fix the World* screens at the Castro on July 26, and the Roda on August 1.

The Yes Men enrage corporations, but Israeli writer-director Yoav Shamir has a potentially touchier sociopolitical axe of his own to grind in his documentary *Defamation*, which plays the Castro on July 28 and the Roda August 6. Shamir asks: What is anti-Semitism today, two generations after the Holocaust?

Good question. To answer it, keen-eyed filmmaker Shamir (*Checkpoint*, *Flipping Out*) jets back and forth across the globe, from an Israeli-sponsored student tour of the death camps at Auschwitz to Crown Heights, Brooklyn to a Moscow synagogue to the Vatican to the offices of the Anti-Defamation League, which is where the investigation starts producing heat. More than one observer is suspicious of the ADL's motives in keeping track of even the smallest anti-Semitic incidents around the world, and of the ADL's cozy relationship with the Israeli military.

One thing seems to bother such commentators as Israeli peacenik Uri Avnery, blackballed historian Norman Finkelstein, and political scientists John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt: that the "Israeli Lobby" of neo-cons in the United States is using charges of anti-Semitism to silence critics of Israeli policy, especially toward Palestine. Avnery goes so far as to say that "The phenomenon of anti-Semitism only exists in the Israeli media and in the minds of the Jewish big shots of the world who make a living fighting anti-Semitism."

9th San Francisco Jewish Film Festival

July 23-August 10 at the Castro Theatre and Jewish Community Center San Francisco, Roda Theatre at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, CineArts, Palo Alto; Smith Rafael Film Center, San Rafael

Are people who criticize Israel really anti-Semites in disguise? No, say Shamir's subjects, who see the rise of the "anti-Semitic and Holocaust industries" in the United States and elsewhere — Auschwitz in particular has become a macabre theme park where Israeli paramilitary groups parade — as the leading edge of attempts by Israeli and American rightwing Jews to shut down objections to Israel's aggression toward Palestinians. *Defamation* (*Hashmatsa*), yet another example of the Jewish Film Festival's fearless refusal to play it safe, is sure to provoke discussion, especially after the scene in which a weary-looking Israeli man visiting Auschwitz speaks his mind: "We perpetuate death, and that's why we will never become a normal people, because we emphasize death and what happened."

But not all is recrimination, guilt and bitterness at this year's SFJFF. There's also racist skinhead violence and Palestinian sexism, just for the sake of argument. In director Hanro Smitsman's *Skin*, a Dutch teenager named Frankie (played by Robert de Hoog) lives through the Dutch version of *American History X* when he joins a neo-Nazi skinhead gang in Rotterdam circa 1979. Frankie's story is complicated by the fact that his brooding, uncommunicative Jewish father is a death camp survivor. That, alongside Frankie's mother's death from cancer, plus the anti-immigrant turmoil on the streets, drives red-haired Frankie from punk rock to race hatred and prison — the story is told as a flashback from there. It deserves a long look at the Castro (July 29) or the Roda (August 4).

Female Palestinian filmmaker Ibtisam Mara'ana packs a lot of irony into the 56 minutes of her documentary *Lady Kul El Arab* — but then it's a woman's real life we're looking at, not a fictional scenario. Duah Fares, a young and very striking Druze woman from Galilee, has aspirations to use her beauty and poise as a springboard to an international modeling career. In other words, she's ready to get the hell out of Galilee. As she prepares to enter the title Arab Israeli beauty contest, Duah, who has decided to call herself Angelina (after Angelina Jolie), changes her mind and instead enters the much larger Miss Israel pageant, i.e. the big time. But Angelina doesn't reckon on the disapproval of her parents and the local Druze sheik, all of whom forbid "their women" to appear in public in a bathing suit. What happens next? Find out at the Castro on July 30 or the Roda on August 1.

Other films worth noting at the festival include *Hey Hey It's Esther Blueburger*, writer-director Cathy Randall's pre-teen friendly Jewish Australian coming-of-ager, which takes place at a private school, the kind of place where the girls wear blazers and boaters — and where bespectacled nerd Esther (winningly portrayed by Danielle Catanzariti) can't seem to fit in. When not studying for her bat mitzvah, Esther is roundly humiliated by the snobs. All that changes when she meets the rebellious Sunni and sneaks into her school. It opens the festival on July 23 at the Castro, then plays the Roda on August 6. Also on the light side is *A Matter of Size*, the gently comic story of a seriously overweight Israeli man named Herzl (Itzik Cohen) who solves his fat issues by taking up sumo wrestling with a few of his tubby friends. Sharon Maymon and Erez Tadmor co-direct. At the Roda, August 8.

Two films examine marriage in Arab society. Karin Albou's French/Tunisian narrative production *The Wedding Song* (it's the closing night film at the Castro, July 30, August 1 at the Roda) mines the hammam (public baths) for the story of two female best friends — one Arab, one Jewish — during the German occupation of Tunisia in WWII. The graphic pre-nuptial pubic depilation scene is perhaps a first in North African cinema. Ada Ushpiz's documentary *Desert Brides* hears on-the-spot complaints by Israeli Bedouin women about the Bedouin system of polygamy. They don't like second-class status, but they're afraid to go outside the culture. Don't be afraid to investigate alien cultures. Visit SFJFF.org for Jewish Film Festival updates.

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MOVIES & THEATERS

To learn [illegible] the old reviews at the end of each listing, [illegible] the theater guide at the bottom of this page. Capsule reviews are written by Andrea Gronvall (A.G.), Cole Haddon (C.H.), J.R. Jones (J.J.), and Kelly Vance (K.V.). For a schedule of repertory films, see One-Night Stands at the end of these listings. Please send info fourteen days before event date to editor@eastbayexpress.com.

OPENING

(500) Days of Summer Tom (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) falls for Summer (Zooey Deschanel), but [illegible] (95 min.) [illegible]

Captain Abu Raed An airport janitor [illegible] the city of Amman, Jordan. [illegible] (102 min.) [illegible]

G-Force In the 3-D [illegible] featuring the voices of Will Arnett, Zach Galifianakis, Louden Wainwright III, and more. [illegible]

[illegible] in Time A drama about the [illegible] daughters. [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] (in Hindi with English subtitles). [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] (123 min.) [illegible]

Séraphine [illegible] Séraphine de Senlis [illegible] Highly recommended. [illegible] (125 min.) (K.V.) [illegible]

The Ugly Truth [illegible] Katherine Heigl [illegible] Gerard Butler [illegible] (101 min.) [illegible]

ONGOING

Angels & Demons Who is killing off the College of Cardinals? Tom Hanks, reprising his role from *The Da Vinci Code* [illegible] Robert Langdon, [illegible] Ewan McGregor, Ayelet Zurer, Stellan Skarsgård, [illegible] (138 min.) (K.V.) [illegible]

Away We Go The [illegible] of *Saturday Night Live*'s Maya Rudolph and [illegible] TV star John Krasinski (*The Office*) [illegible] Maggie Gyllenhaal, Carmen Ejogo, Catherine O'Hara, Jeff Daniels, Chris Messina, Allison Janney [illegible]

Showtimes Online

Movie showtimes and online ticket-buying at EastBayExpress.com

[illegible] (98 min.) (K.V.) [illegible]

The Brothers Bloom [illegible] Adrien Brody and Mark Ruffalo [illegible] Rachel Weisz [illegible] Rian Johnson [illegible] Herman Melville's *The Confidence Man* [illegible] Robbie Coltrane, Maximilian Schell, and [illegible] (113 min.) (K.V.) V

Brüno [illegible] Sacha Baron Cohen [illegible] Director Larry Charles and Cohen [illegible] (K.V.) [illegible]

Chéri [illegible] Colette and Director Stephen Frears [illegible] Christopher Hampton's adaptation [illegible] Kathy Bates [illegible] (100 min.) (K.V.) [illegible]

Hubble 3D [illegible] IMAX documentary. CSC

Departures [illegible] Japan [illegible] "[illegible]" [illegible]

Theater Guide

This guide explains the abbreviations at the end of each capsule. AL = Albany, ATC = Alameda Theatre & Cineplex, [illegible] BH = Blackhawk, [illegible] CAPH = CineArts Pleasant Hill, [illegible] CCPH = Century Pleasant Hill, CH = Century Hilltop, CHY = Century Hayward, [illegible] CRC = Crow Canyon, CSC = Chabot Space and Science, CUC = Century Union City, CWC = Century Walnut Creek, DV = Deer Valley, GL = Grand Lake, JL = Jack London, [illegible] UAEB = UA Emery Bay, V = Vine, [illegible]

[illegible] (K.V.) [illegible]

Dinosaurs Alive! [illegible] CSC

Food, Inc. [illegible] (94 min.) (K.V.) [illegible]

Forces of Nature [illegible] National Geographic's latest IMAX [illegible] CSC

The Hangover [illegible] Todd Phillips [illegible] Zach Galifianakis, Bradley Cooper [illegible] (K.V.) [illegible]

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince [illegible] J.K. Rowling's [illegible] Daniel Radcliffe [illegible] Michael Gambon, Emma Watson, Jim Broadbent, Maggie Smith, [illegible] Alan Rickman, [illegible] (153 min.) [illegible]

The Human Body Ever wonder how your body [illegible] CSC

Humpday [illegible] (94 min.) (K.V.) [illegible]

The Hurt Locker Kathryn Bigelow's heart-stopping Iraq war drama follows a U.S. army [illegible] Jeremy Renner [illegible] Anthony Mackie [illegible] Brian Geraghty [illegible] (*The Valley of Elah*) [illegible] With Ralph Fiennes and David Morse (130 min.) (J.J.) CAPH, GA, PM

"A LEADING CONTENDER FOR ACADEMY AWARDS."
"SPELLBINDING. INTELLIGENT. A GREAT FILM."
Chicago Sun-Times [illegible]

"A NEAR-PERFECT MOVIE.
AT ONE MOMENT YOU'LL BE WATCHING IN YOUR SEAT, THEN, WITHOUT WARNING, IT'S DUCK AND COVER. THIS ONE'S THE TOPS"
TIME RICHARD CORLISS

"A VISCERALLY EXCITING, ADRENALINE-SOAKED TOUR DE FORCE
OF SUSPENSE AND SURPRISE. YOU MAY EMERGE FROM 'THE HURT LOCKER' SHAKEN, EXHILARATED AND DRAINED. BUT YOU WILL ALSO BE THINKING."
The New York Times A.O. SCOTT

"★★★★★
ONE OF THE DEFINING FILMS OF THE DECADE.
WHAT YOU'LL REMEMBER MOST WILL BE JEREMY RENNER'S REMARKABLY COMPLEX COMMANDER. IT'S OBVIOUS WE'VE WITNESSED A STAR-MAKING PERFORMANCE"
DAILY NEWS ELIZABETH WEITZMAN

"A CLASSIC OF TENSION, FEAR AND BRAVERY.
IT WILL BE STUDIED 10 YEARS FROM NOW"
THE NEW YORKER DAVID DENBY

"A FULL-THROTTLE BODY SHOCK OF A MOVIE.
IT GETS INSIDE YOU LIKE A VIRUS, PUTS YOUR NERVES IN A BLENDER, AND TWISTS YOUR GUTS INTO A GORDIAN KNOT"
THE VILLAGE VOICE SCOTT FOUNDAS

"AN UNQUALIFIED TRIUMPH.
IT SIMPLY BLOWS YOU APART BY THE TIME THIS REMARKABLE FILM COMES TO AN END, WE FEEL IT IN OUR SOULS."
Los Angeles Times KENNETH TURAN

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Claudia Puig, USA TODAY

"★★★★"
Roger Ebert, CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

"GRADE: A."
Owen Gleiberman
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Zooey Deschanel

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M&T

I Love You, Beth Cooper With roles that seem either made for Michael Cera and Jonah Hill, this wish-fulfillment comedy [illegible] of Superbad though a more accurate title might be Sub-Bad. A graduating high school valedictorian (Paul Rust) takes [illegible] of his commencement speech to humiliate all the classmates who [illegible] and to proclaim his love for the [illegible] of a cheerleading captain (Hayden Panettiere). [illegible] she shows up at his door that night with two [illegible] to take him and his dorky movie-quoting pal (Jack Carpenter) on a [illegible] they'll never forget. But I already have, so I'll quit here. Chris Columbus directed. (101 min.) (UJ) CUC, [illegible]

Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs Not even 3D can [illegible] third entry in the Fox animation franchise. [illegible] motley crew of prehistoric [illegible] they face threats from [illegible] the earth's [illegible] the sixth [illegible] tale of dinosaur eggs, [illegible] and [illegible] the [illegible] a Tyrannosaurus rex. Simon Pegg provides the voice of a buccaneer weasel that [illegible] the gang through [illegible] the [illegible] the influx of [illegible] baby animals. Carlos Saldanha and Mike Thurmeier directed. Among the other voice talent are Ray Romano, Queen Latifah, Denis Leary, and John Leguizamo (87 min.). (A.G.) [illegible]

Kambakkht Ishq Sabir Khan directed and co-wrote this romantic comedy about an [illegible] stuntman (Akshay Kumar) in Hollywood who's on the hunt for true love. With cameos by Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and more (142 min.). [illegible]

Land of the Lost Will Ferrell's body may be flabby but his comic timing is perfect and the writing is sharp in this intelligent but goofy [illegible] about a professor of "quantum paleontology" (Ferrell) who time-travels with another [illegible] (Anna Friel) and a [illegible] (the dependable Danny McBride) [illegible] jungle setting about dinosaurs [illegible] and all sorts of pop-cultural anomalies [illegible] the soundtrack of A Chorus Line [illegible] (Lemony Snicket's Series of Unfortunate Events) [illegible] and [illegible] pile as the [illegible] about as Chaka, a hairy [illegible] Loosely based on Sid and Marty Krofft's '70s-era TV series, and yes, that's Leonard Nimoy's voice as the Zorn (93 min.) [illegible]

The Living Sea You've seen Finding Nemo; now see the real thing. It's a trip to the bottom of the ocean, narrated by Meryl Streep, with music by Sting. CSC

Moon Astronaut Sam Bell (played by Sam Rockwell) serving a three-year [illegible] on the moon with his GERTY 3000 [illegible] already [illegible] as the film opens, and things deteriorate from there. The [illegible] Sam [illegible] Rockwell [illegible] is Sam [illegible] who doesn't [illegible] Has [illegible] Sam [illegible] enough? These and other questions take up most of the time in director Duncan Jones' [illegible] with a screenplay by Nathan Parker from a story by Jones (97 min.) [illegible]

My Sister's Keeper Screenwriter Jeremy Leven and director Nick Cassavetes [illegible] for [illegible] after their [illegible] The Notebook (2004), [illegible] Picoult's best seller about a family [illegible] by the trauma of one child's leukemia. The [illegible] 11-year-old Anna (Abigail Breslin), who [illegible] by her [illegible] (Jason Patric and Cameron Diaz) to serve as a medical [illegible] for her ailing older sister, balks [illegible] up a kidney and [illegible] an ambulance-chasing attorney (Alec Baldwin) to sue the parents for [illegible] Surrounding and [illegible] this [illegible] is a fair amount of [illegible] humor and [illegible] Cassavetes is frequently [illegible] as the [illegible] mother and Joan Cusack is unusually tough and [illegible] as the presiding judge (109 min.) [illegible]

Mysteries of Egypt National Geographic and a team of scientists reveal the architecture, legends, history [illegible] mysteries of ancient Egyptian civilization. CSC

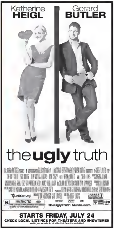
Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian How to [illegible] the wonder out of a setting: Send Ben Stiller and an army of CGI critters through a [illegible] "educational" [illegible] This [illegible] night watchman Stiller [illegible] with Amelia Earhart (Amy Adams) [illegible] an array of [illegible] actors including Owen Wilson, Steve Coogan, Hank Azaria [illegible] Christopher Guest, and [illegible] Williams as Teddy Roosevelt. The series [illegible] Shawn Levy (105 min.) [illegible]

The Proposal [illegible] The Proposal is [illegible] and [illegible] and yet none of this matters, as the [illegible] Sandra Bullock as [illegible] and Ryan Reynolds as her [illegible] make up for all the movie's shortcomings. Consider the premise: [illegible] Margaret (Bullock) [illegible] she has no choice but to [illegible] Andrew (Reynolds) and marrying him. They [illegible] up to Alaska to meet his [illegible] the [illegible] his spirited grandma (Betty White, brilliant as always) and, before long, Andrew takes on new dimensions, Margaret begins to see and so [illegible] you get the idea. It's not [illegible] science. It's just fun (107 min.). [illegible]

Public Enemies The Michael Mann-Johnny Depp version of legendary [illegible] John Dillinger's life and times [illegible] the Great Depression [illegible] Dillinger (Depp) trying [illegible] Melvin Purvis (Christian Bale) [illegible] As dramatized by director Mann and [illegible] Ronan Bennett and Ann Biderman (they adapted Bryan Burrough's book), Dillinger [illegible] J. Edgar Hoover's FBI [illegible] enough [illegible] ambushes, and Johnny [illegible] violent fantasies of a [illegible] Marion Cotillard as Dillinger's girlfriend, Stephen Dorff as a henchman, Billy Crudup as [illegible] Hoover [illegible] a 1930s [illegible] Stephen Lang as a [illegible] Gorgeous cinematography by Dante Spinotti. [illegible] (140 min.) [illegible]

Shortkut – The Con is On Struggling assistant [illegible] (Akshay Khanna) and aspiring actor [illegible] (Arshad Warsi) [illegible] in this comedy about lofty goals and conflicting [illegible]

Soul Power This supremely entertaining musical documentary, more or less a [illegible] of [illegible] When We Were Kings, follows the progress of a [illegible] staged in Kinshasa, Zaire in 1974 [illegible] with Muhammad Ali and George Foreman's "Rumble in the Jungle" heavyweight [illegible] Everyone [illegible]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gets their Africa on: Soul Brother #1 James Brown, [illegible] Celia Cruz and the Fania All Stars, bluesman B.B. King, soul crooner Bill Withers, the Jazz Crusaders, singer Miriam Makeba, the Spinners, Manu Dibango et al. Naturally no one apologizes [illegible] the rhythms and political music flow out of him in every direction. Director Jeffrey Levy-Hinte, who edited Kings, [illegible] done with [illegible] high life, but we [illegible] keep watching this for hours more, if only for the [illegible] and sweat. (93 min.) (KV) $

Star Trek [illegible] the future of Star Trek, and to add [illegible] thought was dead. That was accomplished by jumping back in time (from Captain Jean-Luc Picard's *The Next Generation*) to the [illegible] James T. Kirk, Spock, and Dr. McCoy [illegible] the Enterprise — before even the original [illegible] series. Thanks to a [illegible] Spock (Leonard Nimoy) from the [illegible] future [illegible] manages to [illegible] a sense of surprise to the proceedings. [illegible] Zachary Quinto and Karl Urban as Spock and McCoy), and the [illegible] will make newbies want to sign up and join Starfleet. (126 min.) [illegible]

The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3 [illegible] no improvement on the 1974 original. [illegible] New York City subway train and it's up to [illegible] Denzel Washington to stop them. [illegible] John Travolta [illegible] and NYC mayor James Gandolfini take center stage. [illegible] screenplay by Brian Helgeland, adapted from John Godey's novel. (106 min.) (KV) [illegible]

Terminator Salvation Fourth installment (not counting the TV series) of the [illegible] popular [illegible] John Connor (Christian Bale) against [illegible] of evil giant robots bent on stamping out humankind, with [illegible] help from a renegade [illegible] as a Resistance fighter (Sam Worthington). Same concept as always — kill Connor's father, [illegible] Director McG (*Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle*) [illegible] Bale [illegible] Williams [illegible] written by [illegible] John D. Brancato and Michael Ferris (115 min.) (KV) [illegible]

Tetro Director Francis Ford Coppola achieves a light, [illegible] very European tone of [illegible] drama about a pair of estranged Argentine half-brothers: a young man [illegible] Bennie (Alden Ehrenreich) and a bitter, older [illegible] Tetro (Vincent Gallo) — who reside in Buenos Aires and reluctantly dredge up the past. It's Coppola's [illegible] convincingly realized film since Dracula, [illegible] along by Mihai Malaimare Jr.'s beautiful [illegible] and in color [illegible] tribute to [illegible] Powell's The Tales of Hoffmann. The well-chosen supporting cast includes Maribel Verdú, [illegible] and Carmen Maura as "Alone." (127 min.) (KV) $

Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen [illegible] Michael Bay delivers a sequel to his 2007 hit, inspired by the 1980s Hasbro toys, about robotic aliens that morph into killer machines. [illegible] the Autobots and the evil Decepticons. The special effects are [illegible] slightly more humorous [illegible] first movie, but the anti-Arab [illegible] ensuing armageddon [illegible] an Egyptian pyramid and [illegible] ancient [illegible] city of Petra. (150 min.) (A.G.) [illegible]

Up [illegible] on the 3-D animated juggernaut [illegible] adventure fantasy. The story follows a [illegible] (given voice by Ed Asner) [illegible] Directors Pete Docter and Bob Peterson [illegible] (96 min.) (A.G.) [illegible]

Whatever Works [illegible] Larry David [illegible]

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PUBLIC ENEMIES (R)
CHÉRI (R)

SHATTUCK 2230 Shattuck at Kittredge, Berkeley
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M&T

[illegible] watching [illegible] David plays a misanthropic genius in quantum mechanics who takes in and soon marries a sunny but stupid teenager (Evan Rachel Wood) on the run from her Christian parents in Mississippi. Whether you want to trace this romance back to *La Strada* or Allen's marriage to Soon-Yi Previn is your business, but [illegible]. The movie marks Allen's return to New York after three projects shot in Europe, and his Big Apple snugness is more offensive than ever when the girl's mother (Patricia Clarkson) and then her father (Ed Begley Jr.) show up; they're cracker stereotypes who can be redeemed only by awakening to Allen's cosmopolitan attitudes. [illegible] min. [illegible] JJ

ONE NIGHT STANDS

THURSDAY, JULY 23

Lion Marie Priest ([illegible] min., [illegible]) A Outdoor [illegible] (PFA, 7:40)
Night Tide (84 min., 1963) Eccentric Cinema: Overlooked Oddities and Exotica, 1963-82 (PFA, 8:40)
Outdoor UK National Theatre NT Live (BCC, 7:30)
It Came from Beneath the Sea (79 min., 1955) Waterfront Flicks (Jack London Square, Oakland, 7:30)

FRIDAY, JULY 24

Mafioso ([illegible] min., 1962) Ecco l'uomo: Celebrating Italian Actors (PFA, 6:30)
Scent of a Woman (103 min., 1974) Ecco l'uomo: Celebrating Italian Actors (PFA, 8:30)
The Secret Garden ([illegible] min., 1949) Fourth Friday Outdoor Movies (Dunsmuir Hellman Historic Estate, Oakland, 8:30)

SATURDAY, JULY 25

8 1/2 (138 min., 1963) Ecco l'uomo: Celebrating Italian Actors (PFA, 6:00)
The Last Movie (108 min., 1971) Eccentric Cinema: Overlooked Oddities and Exotica, 1963-82 (PFA, 8:45)
The Big Lebowski (117 min., 1998) Preceded by a performance by the Mar Supporter [illegible] (Fox Theater, Oakland, 7:30)

SUNDAY, JULY 26

Humoresque (125 min., 1947) Into the Vortex: Female Voice in Film (PFA, 5:00)
Brancaleone's Army (120 min., 1966) Ecco l'uomo: Celebrating Italian Actors (PFA, 7:30)

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29

La Bonté [illegible] (125 min., 1966) Ecco l'uomo: Celebrating Italian Actors (PFA, 7:00)
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MUSIC

JAMMING WITH THE BEATLES AND THE DEAD

Rubber Souldiers bring the Sixties to the 21st century

By Paula Lehman

Rubber Souldiers.

In 1972, David Gans' roommate dragged him to a Grateful Dead concert, and his life was changed forever. From then on, all his musical endeavors have been Dead oriented. He started playing Dead-influenced music at what he calls "steak & lobster" gigs. He drew crowds from his generation and others with a taste of the past and a hint of the future. Two decades later, Gans now takes his solo act on tour, playing festivals and hooking up with world-renowned jam bands such as String Cheese Incident and Phil Lesh & Friends. He continues to stay connected to local bands in the East Bay, showcasing them on his radio show, the Grateful Dead Radio Hour, on KFOG. He still looks the part, too, usually adorned in gray sweatpants, tie-dye shirt, round tinted shades, and long gray hair tied into a ponytail.

Gans, who has lived near Lake Merritt for the past 35 years, is a classic jammer. He's known to the community as an accomplished guitarist and a symbol of the old days with a modern twist, using technology such as a looping device. But his strength is remaining loyal to music of the Sixties and Seventies, from the Dead to the Doobie Brothers. It's a philosophy that he eventually used to create perhaps his most successful endeavor to date.

One fateful day in the KFOG studio, Gans invited local musicians Lorin and Chris Rowan to play a segment. As the two tuned their instruments, they started playing a Beatles song. Unable to resist, Gans chimed in with his baritone voice and the classic Beatles three-part harmony filled the room. The jam turned into Gans' newest project, *Rubber Souldiers*.

To the casual listener, Rubber Souldiers appears to be a mere cover band. To old hippies, it's a trip down memory lane. But to the musicians themselves, the band is an improvisational take off of the British legends influenced by the Beatles but in no way a clone.

"We're not a tribute band," Lorin said. "The concept is to continue seeking out new capillaries, new brain cells to Beatles songs."

The band is starting to take on its own "identity," said Gans. The band visits Florida twice a year for the Magnolia Festival and has played festivals in Northern California through word-of-mouth. Gans attributes the band's swift popularity to the ability of Beatles songs to transgress generations of listeners.

"They've kept their catalog fresh," said Gans. "When the movie *Across the Universe* hit theaters, a whole new generation was introduced to their music. I think there is a revival of Beatles music among young people who heard that."

The result is what Gans envisions the Beatles would sound like if they had become a San Francisco band and written songs that were longer than three minutes. Rubber Souldiers turn the original songs into ten-minute jams, melding multiple songs together and sometimes drifting into a different sound completely.

"We take those songs and stretch them out," Gans said. "We shuffle them like a deck of cards. We're reverent in that we're giving them a lot of love, but we're irreverent in that we're adapting their music to our own style."

After years of typical hippie strife in the music biz, Gans has found a unique formula to bring him into mainstream popularity. He's moving listeners in the direction of musical appreciation and old-school talent by bringing back the brilliance of the Beatles and the jamability of the Dead.

But Gans says perhaps the greatest thing he learned from the Dead was that storytelling and causing a political and emotional stir are the backbone of creating great music. "Whatever people think about the Grateful Dead, they were great storytellers," Gans said. "I also grew up thinking music was going to change the world. I'm a diehard, Sixties tree-hugging, world-changing kind of guy and I write songs about that kind of stuff."

His philosophies and current musical style are best exemplified in his new solo album, *The Ones that Look the Whitest Taste the Best*. The first track, "Shove in the Right Direction," perhaps best sums up the current stage of his musical career. "Save Us from the Saved" is critical of the conservative religious right who condemn what Gans considers natural freedoms such as abortion rights and marijuana use. He may be becoming more aggressive as his music develops, but his philosophy and style remain constant.

"Music is art and art is not a mirror to reflect the world but a hammer with which to shape it," said Gans. "I don't have a heavy-handed agenda. I'm just a guy who wants to enlighten and persuade. You can't change the world through coercion."

Gans continued to expand his musical knowledge in the form of freelance writing and photography. In the 1970s he worked a series of day jobs including his radio show on KFOG and for the long-defunct *BAM* magazine, interviewing everyone from Leo Fender, creator of the Fender guitar, to the Grateful Dead themselves. On a press junket in 1982 when he traveled to Jamaica to cover the Dead, Gans schmoozed up Peter Simon and the editor of Simon's book, *Playing in the Band: An Oral and Visual Portrait of the Grateful Dead*. The goal was to sell some of Gans' photos, but with his credentials and a bit of luck — Simon's writer had just dropped out of the deal — Simon soon signed up Gans as the co-author of the book. "My whole life I've been able to be a musician," Gans said. "I've been able to play and find related ways to really make a living."

Three decades of music education has brought Gans to where he is today, analyzing music from the past and shaping it to the jamability of the modern jam scene. He continues to perform solo throughout the country but holds a special place in his heart for the Rowan brothers and Rubber Souldiers. Lorin and Chris describe him as the fourth Rowan (Peter, who also performs on the road, is the third Rowan brother). And their family continues to expand. Rather than take a full band on the road, the trio picks up local musicians along the way and gets them into the groove. Thanks to *Rubber Souldiers*, the Sixties are getting new life in the 21st century. ●

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7th St. Band has been called the Bay Area reggae scene's best kept secret. Roots reggae from Berkeley, California, 7th St. Band has an authentic and powerful sound. Created and led by drummer Edi Arnold, 7th St. Band has slowly become a force to be reckoned with. Since 1992, Edi has been the strength and consistent foundation of the band. Danny McCaffrey (bass, executive producer) and Benjamin Goff (keys) reunited with 7th St. in 2003. The award-winning founder of the Funkanauts, Jason Collins (guitar), joined the team in 2005 and the four piece has been polishing its sound ever since. 7th St. Band has collaborated with and backed many talented artists in the reggae sphere: Lloyd Brown (UK), Army (St. Croix, for the first time this summer), Messenjah Selah (Jamaica), President Brown (Jamaica), Winstrong (Suriname), Ras Indio (Belize, for the first time this summer), Jr. Toots (Jamaica), Brother Ayouba (Ivory Coast), Roots Natty and Mowntes (Puerto Rico) and Earl Zero (Jamaica). 7th St. is currently working around the Bay and Northern California with Luv Fyah (Bay Area) and Bright Ghost (St. Croix). Keep an eye out at the end of the summer for 7th St.'s first release of original riddims, as well as a collaborative album with Luv Fyah and Bright Ghost. People of the world, no matter where you go in your travels, where you end up or pass through "... you've got to reach 7th St.!" - UNM Peace and Blessings

WEBSITES: MYSPACE.COM/7THSTREETSOUND TWITTER.COM/7THSTBAND

SEXUAL SHAMAN OF THE DUDES

Har Mar Superstar brings his potent R&B antics to Lebowski Fest.

By Reyan Ali

In the seven years that Lebowski Fest has paid fanboy homage to 1998 cult comedy *The Big Lebowski*, the event has grown from a Louisville, Kentucky, party into an R-rated road show of goofy indulgence. As attendees trade barbs devised by the Coen brothers, White Russians will be consumed, bowling balls will be tongued and tossed, and the likelihood of hearing the word "dude" lobbed around will reach an astounding high. Dressing up is encouraged. There will be beards, bathrobes, hunting jackets, and Viking gear (that last one is intended for the females). Yeah, viewings of the movie are scheduled, too, but why rewatch a silver-screen Walter Sobchak when you could hang out with a stranger dressed just like him?

Nowhere is the jolly excess of the fest more apparent than in the selection of R&B jester Har Mar Superstar as this tour leg's marquee musical act. At first, the choice is puzzling: What's an overweight guy in briefs singing about drunk dialing have to do with a film whose soundtrack boasted Captain Beefheart, Creedence Clearwater Revival, and Townes Van Zandt? By the time the pudgy charmer nails his first falsetto, the epiphany has hit. It's the absurdity of Har Mar's performances, not his music, that makes an excellent choice to lead the revelry. He is a man so dedicated to his kitsch that he created his own character. In a better universe, this Seventies-esque holdover would be shoehorned into a *Lebowski* rewrite; in the meantime, his camp bridges the fictional and the flesh and blood.

Har Mar Superstar is the dance-floor-ready alter ego of Minnesotan Sean Tillman. With a history that includes punk/noise-rock projects Sean Na Na and Calvin Krime, Tillman crafted his flamboyant persona around 2000. Copping two-thirds of his new moniker from the name of a local mall, Har Mar was a response to what Tillman felt was a humorlessness that was saturating music around the late 1990s. "I realized that people want to dance more than they want to hear people cry about their emotional problems," he said. "I wanted to have some fun and play the music that I actually listen to." The material in question turned out to be sexualized R&B brimming with come-ons, the kind exemplified by Stevie Wonder and R. Kelly. The difference between Har Mar and his pop inspirations is that Tillman turns the shtick tongue-in-cheek.

Show Details:
Har Mar Superstar performs on Saturday, July 25, at the Fox Theater (1807 Telegraph Ave., Oakland). 7:30 p.m., $22.50. 510-452-0438 or TheFoxOakland.com

The music and character are intimately linked elements: absorbing one without the other lessens the overall enjoyability. Amidst snappy beats and shimmering production, Har Mar alternates between a high-pitched post-Bee Gees call and raplike inflections. He sings about BDSM ("Cut Me Up"), provocative business clothing ("Power Lunch"), and public transportation ("EZ Pass").

Har Mar Superstar George Augusto

Most of Har Mar's performances find him shirtless or pantsless. When he does wear clothes, a vest with tassels is likely to be involved. A cursory Google search reveals more about his theatrics. Live shots show him gyrating, putting a snake to the mouth of an E.T. puppet, and looking befuddled as a dollar bill sticks to his chest hair.

The low-key offstage Tillman contrasts Har Mar's buoyant, anything-goes showmanship. While polite, the musician is reserved and keeps the conversation sparse and mostly nonspecific. (His personal MySpace page reveals a crucial detail: "I like playing music. I hate talking about it.") He emphasizes that Har Mar is an instinctual character, not something that he has ever given much thought to. "I think I was more inspired by bad performers," as opposed to good performers, he added, electing not to name names (there isn't one in particular). His reason for performing barely clothed is so practical that it takes a lot of the humor away: "Stage clothes are expensive and they get ruined if you sweat in them too much. It made sense to take them off." Are the delights of Har Mar still foreign to some? "Oh yeah, there's tons of people that still don't get it," Tillman said with a laugh. "I don't think about that, really."

After going on Har Mar hiatus following 2004's *The Handler*, Tillman's recent return will be accompanied by October's *Dark Touches*. The material available from the album thus far is indisputably Har Mar. The slithering "Creative Juices" finds him name-dropping R.E.M., Grace Slick, Grey Goose, *The Golden Girls*, Patrick Swayze, and *Walker, Texas Ranger*. "Don't Ask Don't Tell" is thumping club fun. "There's a lot of straight-up pop," Tillman noted of *Touches*. "It's all over the map."

While Har Mar's Lebowski Fest run won't mark his debut at the event (he played a Seattle date a year or two ago), he's looking forward to his performance. "I leave it open-ended so I can explore on stage," he said. "There's not anything spectacular [like] fireworks lined up, but I am sure some weird shit is going to happen." ●

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CD REVIEWS

DINOSAURS, VIPERS, AND COMMUTERS

Slacker-era alt rock, raw hillbilly, and bipolar dream-pop.

Dinosaur Jr.

Farm

Pre-grunge slacker-era alternative rock doesn't age as badly as other trends since American indie bands before Nirvana mostly strived to sound different. For Dinosaur Jr. the goal was always pure bubblegum pop buried beneath layers of crushing guitars, with catchy melodies nearly rendered moot by singer/guitarist J Mascis' distinctive Tom Petty with a head-wound vocal delivery.

Mascis and co. (drummer Murph and bassist Lou Barlow) are true originals; you can never mistake them for another act. *Farm*, the band's ninth album and their first for the Jagjaguwar label, picks up where 2007's *Beyond*, a brilliant return from a ten-year hiatus, left off, even if it exchanges streamlined song structures for a varied attack. Case in point: "Plans," a seven-minute tune that simply glides courtesy of open-chord arpeggios and Barlow's high-end fretting. The solo here is particularly emotive, and you certainly must admire Mascis for working hard to avoid repetition and refusing to be lazy.

Further, the bright, shiny and effortless chorus in "Over It," along with Mascis' signature searing wah-wah pedal fuzz, prove Dinosaur Jr. isn't just punching the clock for this post-reunion effort. Indeed, once you experience the delirious wallop of "There's No Here" or the flattering hammer-one of "See You," you'll be scouring the house for a VHS copy of *1991: The Year Punk Broke*. (Jagjaguwar)

— Jarret Keene

Wayne Hancock

Viper of Melody

Some folks hold with the concept that rock 'n' roll was created by African Americans and usurped and exploited by Caucasians — wrong. Rock 'n' roll was wrought by combinations of sounds from black and white culture: from blues, R&B, and gospel of the former and the country, Western swing, rockabilly, and hillbilly boogie (a precursor to rockabilly) of the latter.

Without coming off as a self-aggrandizing thrwhack, Texan Wayne Hancock literally embodies the "hillbilly" aspect of the equation. With a palette consisting solely of acoustic, electric, and steel guitars and acoustic (upright) bass and a rough-hewn vocal drawl somewhat reminiscent of the young Hank Williams Sr., Hancock and ensemble sound as if they've emerged from an Oklahoma oil field honky tonk circa 1954. While *Viper of Melody* is produced by studio pro Lloyd Maines (daddy of one of the Dixie Chicks), there's none of the pop polish that's neutered and gutted country music for the past decade or two. Just as cool, Hancock doesn't sound nearly as mannered as some of his neo-rockabilly contemporaries — his style is based in pre-Countrypolitan/Nashville Vegas country music (i.e. Williams, Ernest Tubb, Webb Pierce) more than in rockabilly.

But he can and does rock, make no mistake. The chugging "High Rolling Train" has a crackling six-string solo that wouldn't be out of place on an early Beatles session. Several of the steel guitar solos reflect a bit of suave jazz influence, too. Compared to the *American Idol*-esque pop passing itself off as country music, *Viper of Melody* is as intensely raw and subversive as the first albums by the Clash and Ramones. (Bloodshot)

— Mark Keresman

Wayne Hancock performs on Friday, July 24, at the Uptown Nightclub (1928 Telegraph Ave., Oakland). 9 p.m. $12. UptownNightclub.com.

Jason Lytle

Yours Truly, The Commuter

Three years after the breakup of Grandaddy, Jason Lytle returns with a collection of dreamy pop songs about nature and modernity, bathed in quirky pathos. Sounding very much like a new Grandaddy album, Lytle's solo debut waltzes between tempered exhilaration and grandiose gloominess with a winning bipolar swagger.

The album starts strongly: "Yours Truly, The Commuter" is a rollicking reintroduction of Lytle, complete with a quasi-celebratory chorus: *I may be limping/But I'm coming home*. "Brand New Sun" is perfectly imbued with streaky synth blasts and fuzzy guitar, while "Ghost of My Old Dog" (among the year's best titles) is a rowdy salute to loneliness.

Lytle has a tender spot for mellower moods. The trouble is that Lytle's slower songs often forgo rich arrangements in favor of drear repetition, particularly without the balance of his bandmates. After a bouncy opening trio, eight of the final nine songs hover between mid-tempo and ballad. Luckily, Lytle's songwriting abilities are strong enough to sustain the downpour — evidenced on the orchestral "Rollin' Home Alone" or atmospheric closer "Here for Good." Still, the hushed "Forget It" and the plaintive "You're Too Gone" make a case for revving up the guitars a bit more.

Not surprisingly, Lytle's debut ultimately sounds like Grandaddy stripped down: a musical landscape where synths flutter over Lytle's intoning vocals, while guitars are crunched or quietly strummed; drumming, when employed, is adequate. It's a nice place to visit occasionally, but you wouldn't want to live there. (Anti-)

— Michael Pettis

LOCAL LICKS

BY [illegible]

Jaya Velarde

Jaya Velarde EP

This five-song teaser of Velarde's upcoming debut does just what it should: establish her as an artist in her own right. The frequent Quannum Projects collaborator (and wife of rapper Lyrics Born) can carry a song on her own and does with aplomb. Much credit is due to Born's slick hip-hop-meets-R&B production, but Velarde's silky, melodic voice is supremely endearing. (Quannum Projects)

At Sigmund Stern Grove (19th Ave. and Sloat Blvd., San Francisco) on July 26. 2 p.m. free.

Pollux

For the Ghost

Imagine Jeff Buckley fronting a late-Nineties alternative rock band — from Soundgarden's catharsis to Radiohead's contemplation — and you're at least halfway there. This is conveyed with patience and utmost sincerity, from Corey Head's Buckley-esque howl to the band's direct yet emotional performance. Pollux's music would make a fine blanket for a cloudy day. (self-released)

At Annie's Social Club (917 Folsom St., San Francisco) on July 22. 8 p.m. $5.

James and Evander

Awkward Turtle EP

With a name like *Awkward Turtle*, it can be just one thing: cutesy, charming, unabashedly twee indie-pop. Something like the Postal Service meets Belle and Sebastian. But Oakland duo James and Evander subverts expectations just enough to make its sleepy electro-pop feel a bit dark. Not a word is spoken among the EP's 22 minutes, contributing to its ethereal moodiness. (500 Records)

Mike P

Whipped Cream

First things first: the record sleeve is adorned with close-up, cropped photos of booties ("Cupcake$") and breasts ("Cookie$"). Mike P's gritty, urban, but not quite gangsta hip-hop can be surprisingly tuneful with help from his pals Andre Nickatina ("Bitch Pt. 2"), Equipto and San Quinn ("Hella Records") and Krushadelic ("Valley of Kingz"). Fillmore Prince represent, as it were. (Mesheuan Records)

Bay Area bands, show us what you've got. Send CDs to Local Licks c/o the *East Bay Express*.

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DAMIAN LAZARUS
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BEST OF THE EAST BAY
BAND SPOTLIGHT

PERFORMING ON THE MAIN STAGE:

Fracas

RELEASES:

"Fracas / 7 Crowns split" (Calendar of Death 2007)
"Hurt On The World" (Calendar of Death 2007)
"On Trial" (Calendar of Death 2003)
"Fracas / Eddie Haskells split" (Calendar of Death 2003)
"A new Host of Torment" (Calendar of Death 2001)
"Always Drunk and Incapable Of Love" (Calendar of Death 2000)
"Fracas self titled" (Dead Sea Captain 1994)

BAND MEMBERS:

Joe Franke (vocals)
Dan Tollhooth (guitar)
Jesse Rosales (guitar)
Ian Carpenter (bass guitar)
Markley Hart (drums)

BAND BIO:

Fracas has been playing in the bay area for more then ten years. Its sound is rooted in the hardcore punk of the early 1980's (Fear, Cro-Mags, Misfits) with nods toward slightly more modern groups like the Jesus Lizard. The band has done several US and European tours, put out four CDs, three 7 inch singles, and appeared on a number of compilations. Its shows are often laced with danger and violence. All of the band members have broken bones. Some have repeatedly broken the same ones.

WEBSITES: WWW.MYSPACE.COM/FRACAS
WWW.CALENDAROFDEATH.COM

CONCERTS & CLUBS

ON SALE THIS WEEK

Tickets go on sale Sunday, July 26 at 10:00 a.m.

Arctic Monkeys. Wed., Sept. 16, 8 p.m. $27. Fox Theater

The Australian Pink Floyd Show Tue., Sept. 22, 8 p.m. $32.50-$39.50. Fox Theater

Echo & the Experience performing [illegible] Thu., Oct. 22, 8 p.m., $42.50. Fox Theater.

Third Eye Blind. Mon., Aug. 17, 8 p.m., $29.50. Fox Theater.

THURSDAY 23

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Big Sandy and His Fly-Rite Boys [illegible] Plaza, 6:30-8 pm, free

Georgie Thorogood & the Destroyers w/ [illegible] Lang, Mountain Winery, 7:30 pm, $55-$75

Grand York Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $18.50-$19.50

More Listings Online

Get info about hundreds of musical events at EastBayExpress.com or m.EastBayExpress.com

Experimental & Avant-Garde

An Evening with [illegible] 21 Grand Gallery/Performance Space, 8:30 pm, $8-$15

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Jazzschool Rising Stars Summer Series Downtown Berkeley BART, noon, free

Daily Park Trio Anna's Jazz Island, 8 pm, $15

La [illegible] Hot Trio vintage gypsy jazz, [illegible], 8:30 pm, free

Live Jazz [illegible] Island, [illegible], 7 pm, free

Thursday Night Live [illegible] Zza's Trattoria, 8:30 pm, free

Rock & Pop

Dr. Good Cafe Van Kleef, 8 pm, $5

Five Eyed Hand w/ Ric Carpenter, Starry Plough, 9 pm, $8.5

[illegible] [illegible] 7:30 pm, [illegible]

Sam Harley [illegible] 6-9 pm, free

The Moody Blues Mountain Winery, 7:30 pm, $55-$79.50

The Spazmatics [illegible] Sports Bar, 10 pm, free

We Used to Be Good w/ guests, [illegible] 8 pm, $5

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

The Pleasures of Love [illegible] Stevie Wonder & [illegible] Yoshi's, 8 & 10 pm, $16

Thursday Night Live live music every week, Shattuck Nightclub, 7 pm, $8-$12

Unplugged live R&B, soul, & jazz [illegible] Club Anton, 8 pm, $10-$20

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Gojogo UC Berkeley Botanical Garden, 5:30 pm, $12-$15

President [illegible] and the Solid Foundation Band CD Release w/ [illegible] 8:30 pm, $12-$15

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Cafe du Nord, 7:30 pm, $8-$15

The Handsome Family w/ [illegible] Bottom of the Hill, 8 pm, $12

King's Night all-star blues jam, [illegible] Tavern, [illegible] 11:30 pm, free

[illegible] [illegible] 8-11:30 pm, $15

[illegible] w/ Jenny [illegible], The Independent, 8 pm, $15

Experimental & Avant-Garde

[illegible] w/ Forms of Things Unknown, Peter Kolovos, [illegible] & the Dreamland Puppet Theater, Tim Perkis, Chris Brown, & more, Community Band Center, 8:15 pm, $6-$12

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Nice Jewish Girls Gone Bad music, burlesque & comedy, Red Devil Lounge, 8 pm, $12-$15

Rock & Pop

10 Bands for $10 featuring [illegible]

Karma w/ the Magic Wands, 330 Ritch, 9:30 pm, $10 under 21 $12

[illegible] Party w/ Mr. Loveless, [illegible] pm, $10

Midnight w/ the Fashioned Way, White [illegible], & 100 Swans, Cafe du Nord, 8:30 pm, $10

Doc Alps w/ Linda Hagood, Tom Greenwood & [illegible]

[illegible] Tavern, 9 pm, $7

[illegible] w/ [illegible] by Roberts, [illegible], 8 pm, $7

Solid Quad Logic w/ [illegible] & Scraping for Change, Slim's, 8 pm, $13

The [illegible] w/ [illegible] American Music Hall, 9 pm, $20

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

De La Soul The Fillmore, 8 pm, $38.50

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

[illegible] Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 & 10 pm, $20-$25

Series No. 8 Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum, 12:30-1:30 pm, free

FRIDAY 24

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Zoo Cafe Van Kleef, 9 pm, $5

Lady [illegible] Band Anna's Jazz Island, 8 pm, $14

The Mile Tide w/ Mad Buffalo, Starry Plough, 9:30 pm, $8

Wayne [illegible] w/ Lil' Anne & the [illegible], [illegible] & the Band [illegible], Uptown, 9 pm, $12-$15

Classical & Opera

[illegible] [illegible]

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] [illegible], 8 pm, $10

Johnny [illegible] and the Palace of Fun [illegible], 8 pm, free

[illegible] Project Trio Jupiter, 8 pm, free

Rock & Pop

Bill [illegible] Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $20.50-$21.50

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible] & [illegible] Criminal, 924 Gilman, 8 pm, $5

[illegible] w/ the Salic, [illegible] & [illegible] Stork Club, 8 pm, $7

The Moody [illegible] w/ [illegible] Amphitheatre, 8 pm, [illegible]

Of [illegible] Fox Theater, 8 pm, $27.50

The Shells [illegible] Gallery, 9 pm, free

The Red [illegible] [illegible] Plaza, 7-8:30 pm, free

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

The [illegible] La Peña Cultural Center, 8 pm, $10-$12

Jerry Kennedy [illegible] & Cafe, 7:30 pm, free

[illegible] [illegible] Garden, 12-1 pm, free

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

[illegible] Tour featuring Slightly Stoopid, Snoop Dogg, & Stephen Marley, [illegible] Amphitheatre, 6 pm, [illegible]-$87.50

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Yoshi's, 8 & 11 pm, $20

[illegible] Experience CD Release w/ DJ Jeremiah, Ashkenaz, 9:30 pm, $10-$15

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Cafe du Nord, 9 pm, $15

[illegible] CD Release Biscuits & Blues, 8 & 10 pm, $20

Jay [illegible] w/ [illegible], Bottom of the Hill, 8 pm, $12-$14

Classical & Opera

Midsummer Mozart Festival w/ Seymour Lipkin, piano, David Sprung, [illegible] performing *Symphony No. 29 in A, K.201*, *Piano Concerto No. [illegible] in F, K.459*, & more, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, 8 pm, $38-$60

Experimental & Avant-Garde

[illegible] featuring Forms of Things Unknown, Peter Kolovos, [illegible] & the Dreamland Puppet Theater, Tim Perkis, Chris Brown, & more, Community Band Center, 8:15 pm, $6-$12

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 & 10 pm, [illegible]

Rock & Pop

[illegible] Red Devil Lounge, 9 pm, $8-$10

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] w/ [illegible] & Pac Div, The Regency Ballroom, 8 pm, [illegible]

[illegible] w/ [illegible], 9 pm, $13-$15

[illegible] w/ [illegible], 8 pm, [illegible]

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

[illegible] Elbo Room, 9 pm, $10

SATURDAY 25

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Bobby [illegible] Band Saddle Rack, 7:15 pm, $5

[illegible] Juke Joint [illegible] & the Tight Fit Blues Band, Everett & Jones Barbeque, 9 pm, free

[illegible] Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $18.50-$19.50

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Cafe Van Kleef, 9 pm, $5

Patrick Maloney & [illegible] [illegible], 4-7:30 pm, free

Classical & Opera

Midsummer Mozart Festival w/ Seymour Lipkin, piano, David Sprung, [illegible] performing *Symphony No. 29 in A, K.201*, *Piano Concerto No. [illegible] in F, K.459*, & more, [illegible], 8 pm, $38-$60

[illegible] Opera [illegible] [illegible]

Ashkenaz
Music & Dance Community Center

WED 7/22 8:30 pm $12 $11 advance
BALKAN BRASS & BEYOND
LA FAHFAEE DU BELGISTAN
7:30 pm Balkan dance lesson with Jerry Duke

THU 7/23 9:30 pm $15 $12 lesson
REGGAE – CD RELEASE PARTY!
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ANDREW DIAMOND
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FRI 7/24 9:30 pm $13 $11 lesson
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SAT 7/25 9:00 pm $15 $11 students
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KEN THE VINYL ARCHAEOLOGIST

FRI 24TH:
DJ WONWAY POSIBUL
hip hop, reggae, soul

SAT. 25TH:
DISTORTION II STATIC PRESENTS:
YES YES Y'ALL
PRINCE ARIES
HAYLOW & WONWAY POSIBUL

SUN. 26TH:
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Starry Plough

THU 7/23 9:00 PM $10
FIVE EYED HAND
BO CARPER (OF NEW MONSOON)

FRI 7/24 9:00 PM $8
TIN MILE TIDE
MAD BUFFALO

SAT 7/25 9:00 PM $10
LIVE DEAD (3 SETS)

FRI 7/30 8:45 PM $10
OR, THE WHALE
EL OLIO WOLOF
MIKAEL JORGENSEN (OF WILCO)

SAT 7/31 9:00 PM $15
THE MOTHER HIPS
BIRDMONSTER
THE BEAUTIFUL LOSERS

FRI 8/1 9:00 PM $10
WENDY DARLING
THE GRAHAM PARMER BAND
MIRROR FAUNA

SUNDAYS 5:00 PM
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FRI 10PM $10 after 11pm
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DJ SMOKE 1 & DJ IRIE DOLE
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PICKS

Issa Bagayogo

Having released four albums with Six Degrees Records, Malian singer **Issa Bagayogo** very much keyed in to current trends in world music, i.e. the blending of folkloric and modern elements. What makes his music interesting, though, is how much it resembles vintage bluegrass and old blues. Bagayogo plays a six-string West African instrument called the *kamele n'goni*, which could easily be mistaken for a banjo on first listen. He sings in Malian and uses some complex polyrhythmic grooves, but the texture and tone of his songs recall American roots music of the late-19th and early-20th centuries. A three-person vocal chorus helps round out the tunes on his latest release, *Mali Koura*, which mixes fast-paced, danceable tunes with hypnotic ballads. Issa Bagayogo graces Oakland **Yoshi's** (510 Embarcadero) on Friday, July 24, with Afro-Peruvian band Novalima. 8 & 11 p.m., $19. Yoshis.com *— Rachel Swan*

Bill Kirchen

Guitarist **Bill Kirchen** moved West in 1969 with Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen, and logged many gigs at East Bay venues such as the Longbranch Saloon. The band's lone top-40 hit, a remake of Johnny Bond's "Hot Rod Lincoln," introduced the world to Kirchen's blistering six-string sting. His work with the Moonlighters, Nick Lowe, Too Much Fun, and others fed to a solo career that's burned brightly for fifteen years. He'll be revving up truck stop favorites on his 1959 Tele on Friday, July 24, at **Freight & Salvage** (1111 Addison St., Berkeley). 8 p.m. $18.50, $19.50. 510-548-1761 or TheFreight.org *— Eli Messinger*

Counting Crows

Counting Crows

When you run to the art of airing out emotional baggage worthy of a therapist's retainer to your fan base, Adam Duritz has it down to a science. **Counting Crows**' latest album, *Saturday Nights and Sunday Mornings*, continues down the confessional path, split between raucous songs fueled by bacchanalia and acoustic, next-morning aftermath of contrition. And with the band's recent split with longtime label Geffen Records and Duritz going public with his struggles with *dissociative disorder*, the Crows' current tour seems particularly intriguing. Fellow Bay Area peers Michael Franti and Spearhead and SoCal natives Augustana not only share the bill, dubbed the "Traveling Circus and Medicine Show," but all three acts will simultaneously share the stage at different points during the evening. All this musical chaos will go down on Sunday, July 26, at the **Greek Theatre** (Gayley Rd. at Hearst Ave., Berkeley). 7 p.m., $39.50-$85.50. APEConcerts.com *— Dave Gil de Rubio*

Oakland Opera

"Opera by any means necessary" is their motto. Let us hope the means are good ones, as **Oakland Opera**, aka Oakland Opera Theater, presents Handel's *Agrippina 2009*. A portmanteau view of Handel's ancient political farce, the opera has been reset in an absurdist fusion of multiple time periods filled with conflicting anachronisms and projected imagery by filmmaker Ethan Hoerneman.

Issa Bagayogo.

More than the settings have been fiddled with, the score for the opera, which celebrates its 300th birthday this year, has been reset for four musicians, some with electronic instruments. Depending upon Tom Dean's direction and the quality of the singers, this one will leave you either buzzing, bemused, or befuddled. At **Oakland Metro Operahouse** (630 3rd St., Oakland) on Friday, July 24 and Saturday, July 25, (8 p.m.), and Sunday, July 26 (2 p.m.). $20-$28. OaklandOpera.org or 510-763-1146. *— Jason Victor Serinus*

Jenny Owen Youngs

Jenny Owen Youngs has a girlish quality to her vocals that would lead you to expect some kind of oh-too-sensitive folk singer, but her sweet vocals are put at the service of songs full of dark, shocking images. The songs are achingly vulnerable and have bittersweet insights into the hazards of lusting, and fleeting, relationships. On *Transmitter Failure*, her most recent album, she often forsakes her acoustic guitar for synthesizers and a rock band to beef up her tales of heartache and lost love. Youngs will open for **William Fitzsimmons**, another quirky folksinger with a skewed world view, at **the Independent** (628 Divisadero St., San Francisco) on Thursday, July 23. 8 p.m., $15. APEConcerts.com *— J. Poet*

C&C

[illegible] Oakland [illegible] Operahouse. 8 pm. $27

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Beth Boston w/ Rusty Zinn, Armando's, 8 pm. $8
Fred Randolph Jazz Group Revolution Pub. 9:30 pm-12:30 am. $3
Frisky Frolics Speakeasy, 8 pm, free
Little Maddy Jupiter, 8 pm, free
Robin [illegible] & Her Boston Anna's Jazz Island. 8 pm. $14
Red [illegible] The Alley, 9 pm, free
Stompy Jones plus swing [illegible] at 8 p.m. Ashkenaz. 9 pm. $13, students $10
Vorris/[illegible] Quintet Jazzschool, 8 pm, $15

Rock & Pop

Ali [illegible] w/ **[illegible] McKay** Bockel's, 9:30 pm, free
Forget About Boston w/ [illegible], [illegible] & [illegible], Stork Club. 9 pm. $5
Last Call Vinnie's Bar & Grill. 9:30 pm. free
Live Local performing three sets. Starry Plough. 9:30 pm. $10
Los Amiguitos de La Peña Saturday morning children's show w/ [illegible] La Peña Cultural Center. 10:30 am. $5, kids $4
Mystic Knights of the Cobra w/ [illegible], Metal Shakespeare Company, [illegible], & Yankee Kamikaze. 924 Gilman. 8 pm. $6
Nice Vibes w/ the Playground Kings, [illegible]. [illegible] on Telegraph. 8 pm. $10
No [illegible] w/ [illegible] Summit. Shoreline Amphitheatre. 7:30 pm. $15-$90
The Undertaker & His Pals w/ The Sweet Bastards, Hemet & Uptown. 9 pm. $8

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Brown Folk Entertainment Kimball's Carnival. 9 pm. free

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

All Night Mbongo [illegible] at 9:30 p.m., then party till dawn. [illegible] Center for the Arts. 10:30 pm. $15 [illegible]
[illegible] Cubanacán's "[illegible]" La Fonda. 7:30 pm. free
[illegible] w/ [illegible], performing [illegible], devotional songs, [illegible] Church. 8 pm. $10-$20, students/seniors $5-$10
Hawaiian World Fest w/ [illegible], Led Kaapana, & John Cruz. Yoshi's. 7:30 & 10 pm. $25
Peruvian Independence Day featuring [illegible] Cultural Association, La Peña Cultural Center. 8 pm. $15-$18
[illegible] Reggae Night w/ [illegible]. 8 pm. free

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Italian folk music w/ [illegible], Caffe Trieste. 10:30 am-12:15 pm. free

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Outsound New Music Summit featuring Forms of Things Unknown, Peter [illegible], Jess Rowland & the Dreamland Puppet [illegible], Tim Perkis, Chris Brown, & [illegible]. Community Music Center. 8:15 pm. $8-$12

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Spencer Day Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 & 10 pm, $18-$30, kids' matinee $8

Rock & Pop

Bleeed! Revue for Bob Weald & Kluh Revue Slim's, 10 pm, $15
Bombs w/ [illegible], Rock Knocked Sat Cont, Revue 18 Art Gallery, 9 pm, $1 w/ can of food $6
Midnight Rambles w/ Pacos, East Bay Chasers, The Knockout, 10 pm, $7
Sex with the Roads w/ Super Relaxation Club, the Clarinets, Cafe du Nord, 8:30 pm, $10-$12
Vamps The Regency Ballroom, 8 pm, $28.50-$30

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

The Teenas w/ [illegible], Jam-Ba, & Extra, Mezzanine, 8:30 pm, $22.50
Dojirch Brass Band w/ DJ Cavemen, guests, Great American Music Hall, 9 pm, $23-$26
Sweet Baby Zal Biscuits & Blood, 8 & 10 pm, $20

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Rebelde The Independent, 8 pm, $25
Fogo Na Roupa w/ Loco Blanca, Brasil Cub, Gold Center for Latino Arts, 3 & 5 pm, $7
Roots Roots w/ Rainbow Arabic, Prince Robot & DJ Gabby, Roobar, 9:30 pm, $10
SF Songbird Festival w/ Roobar Roobar, Ecoh Vonison, DJ Zelpa, & guests, Bimbos, 9 pm, $19

SUNDAY 26

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Americana Unplugged the Shoppe Americana, & old-time w/ rotating artists, Jupiter, 5 pm, free
Ronny Campbell & Friends Spenger Saloon, 8 pm, free
Traditional Irish Dance with Shay Reese Starry Plough, 5 pm, sliding scale

Classical & Opera

Midsummer Rochestration w/ Seymour Lipkin, pianist, David Sprung, soloist, performing Symphony No. 29 in A, K.201, *Piano Concerto No. 19 in F, K.459*, & more, First Congregational Church, 7 pm, $10-$20
Kairos's Opera Rebels: Kairos's Handel's *Agrippina* Rebelde Metro Operahouse, 2 pm, $27

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Amusements w/ Shunga, Band Uptown, 8:30 pm, $8-$10

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

The Big Enough Band Ashkenaz, 4:30 pm, $10
Cable Keys Trio followed by open jam session, Rebelde Public Library, Golden State Branch, 3-6 pm, free
The Greenhorn Jazz Quintet Guest, & contemporary jazz, Coffee Mill, 3-6 pm, free
The Stella McWilliams Lousy Ashkenaz, 7 pm, $10
W.B. Hotel & the Roses Voyagers Cinco Uno Hotel, 4-7:30 pm, free
Peggy Rose & Kitchen Roses Anna's Jazz House, 8 pm, $12

Rock & Pop

Goodfellas Roobar bands FBA, Ashkenaz, 8 pm, $5
Counting Crows w/ Augustana, Fox Theatre, 7 pm, $39.50-$65.50

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Erie Band w/ Mint Chateau, Ledge, Fox Theater, 7 pm, $40.75-$42.75

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Rebelde Future Rebelde DJ **Rebelde** featuring Matthew Matthew, Mando *Pierro* & Roobar Future, Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $18.50-$19.50

Rebelde World Rock w/ Hapa, Led Kaapana, & John Cruz, Yoshi's, 5 & 8:30 pm, $35
Hollow Trees w/ Kevin Weber, guests, Ashkenaz, 8 pm, $6-$10

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Songwriter Sundays in the lounge w/ Bridget DeCook, Joel Renolds & Rebelde Crane, Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 pm, $8

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Festival Day Yoshi's San Francisco, 2 & 7 pm, $10-$20, kids' matinee $5

Rock & Pop

Band of Horses Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $10
Subzero, the Rhe Pimpmoi w/ Blue Shirt, Ty Segall, Audacity & DJ Mr Jonathan Bowman Thee Rainbows 5 pm, $13
Starlight Mints w/ JP Inc, Red Bones Trade, Bottom of the Hill, 9 pm, $10

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Rouge Rebelde Ensemble Peña Pachamama, 8:30 pm, $10

MONDAY 27

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Rebeers, Rebelde Ensemble Caffe Trieste, 7-9 pm, free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Bill Bell & the Jazz Rhapsodies Quintet Yoshi's, 8 & 10 pm, $10-$15
Uptown Rebbe Rebbe Uptown, 9 pm, $5

SAN FRANCISCO

Rock & Pop

Rebelde Spellbound Fest featuring Leonard Cole, Kill Hannah, Seventh Void & Dawn, Slim's, 7:30 pm, $20-$24
Floating Rome w/ Cornerbands, Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $10
Spinning w/ Noe Marie, the Regency Ballroom, 8 pm, $22.50-$25
Mezzanine w/ Mint Rebelde, Matt Rebe, Great American Music Hall, 8 pm, $14

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Kelly Roose Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 pm, $10-$14

TUESDAY 28

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

The Ricky Tokey Hillbilly Rebelde w/ guest vocalist Patty "Baby" Bennett, Julie's Coffee & Tea Garden, 1 pm, free
Steven Lynn Band Rocco, Golden Pliers, 8:30 pm, free
The Gravie By & By Julie's Coffee & Tea Garden, 1 pm, free
Dennis Shoestrum Sybone Ashkenaz, 8:30 pm, $10

Rock & Pop

So Shooyoko w/ St. St, Stork Club, 9 pm, $5

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Songbird Roobar Yoshi's, 8 pm, $10

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Band Biscuits & Blood, 8-11:30 pm, $11

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Sam Wasserman & Friends featuring Harry Butler and Ron Wasserman, Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 pm, $12-$16

Rock & Pop

Bones of the Loft w/ Rebelde, Make Me Roobar of Families, 9 pm, $12
Jarvis Roobar The Fillmore, 8 pm, $37.50
Jarvis solo and acoustic, the Rebelde, 8 pm, $45.50-$47
The John Golden w/ Blue Ballroom Soul, Callow, Hotel Utah, 8:30 pm, $8
Lazarus w/ Lets Went, Band Rebelde, Bernock Tavern, 8 pm, $6
Shinola w/ the Franklin Trio, Great American Music Hall, 8 pm, $11
Roobar Rome & the Goldenhearts w/ Otis, Alex Stazan, Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $10

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

The Rebelde w/ Pimpcourt, Rickshaw Stop, 7:30 pm, $12

WEDNESDAY 29

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

California Honeydrops open dance floor, Yoshi's, 8 & 10 pm, $10
Darryl Rendigaro Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $15.50-$20.50

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Danny Biscuits Trio vocal jazz, Anna's Jazz House, 8 pm, $10
Jolly/Steinhuber Duo Jupiter, 8 pm, free
Sugar Biscuits Oakland City Center, 12-1 pm, free

Rock & Pop

Kenny Jacks w/ Thee Flee Lines, Tiny Vipers, & Calarius, Stork Club, 9 pm, $5
Roose Band Band Rooney Shoppe, 8:30 pm, $18-$30
The Untethered (Os Rebelde) w/ Coastie Cookie Band, Spiderbug, Ashkenaz, 8 pm, $12, students $5

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Bamboo Swing Shattuck Down Low, 8 pm, $10, students $5

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Kenny Wood Biscuits & Blood, 8-11:30 pm, $16

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Les Rosso Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 pm, $28-$32

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Roobar Band & the Fear of the Set Planet Game Yoshi's San Francisco, 10 pm, $10-$14

Rock & Pop

Boys IV Men Elbo Room, 9 pm, TBA
A Decent Roobar w/ Rupert, Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $10
The Henry Clay People w/ Those Transplants, Lucy Walsh, Hotel Utah, 8:30 pm, $8
Shoppers Rebelde Company w/ the Donkeys, Val Lamar, & Meager Roobar at Hill, 9 pm, $12
Mark Nodes & the Blondes w/ Frank Fairfield, Maya Cook, & Nate Green, Roobar Tavern, 9 pm, $7

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Chin Chin w/ Nino Moschella, Bobbo Kalmensen, Rickshaw Stop, 9 pm, $10
Kalkamendi Kings w/ Shotten Methods, Big B, Bethall, & Short Dawg The Nation, the Regency Ballroom, 7:30 pm, $15-$20

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

The Wailing Roots Slim's, 9 pm, $20-$23 ■

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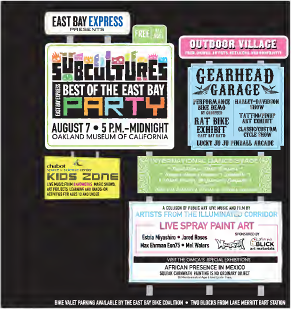

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warm up w/ music by [illegible] 7 10pm
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@ BERKELEY:
FRIDAY • JULY 31 • 6PM
AMOEBA HOME GROWN PRESENTS
MAKEME
[illegible]

[illegible]
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@ Mezzanine: 444 Jessie St., SF
[illegible] Adv/[illegible] Door, 21+
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[illegible]

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August 7, 6pm-Midnight, Free!
@ The Oakland Museum of California
[illegible]
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DJ & DANCE

THURSDAY 23

EAST BAY

Ascuai w/ Tim Aoki (RMC) & Rob Tupenten spinning Afro-Latin, Afrobeatniks, & dancehall, La Taza de Café, 10 pm, $8. [illegible]

Brothers and Sisters w/ live Dodas, Banalo, & guests spinning soulful golden dance music & [illegible] from around the world. The Mint Lounge, 10 pm, free

Fast Times w/ [illegible] Sound spinning reggae & dancehall, Shashamane [illegible] [illegible], 11 pm, free

College Night w/ DJ and VJ Joe C. spinning hip-hop, R&B, dancehall, & Top 40, White Horse Inn, 9 pm, $10, students free w/ valid ID

Rhodes Thursdays rotating DJs spinning reggae & world beat, Air Inn & Lounge, 10 pm, free

Descendants Works DJs Chief Bolina & Ashé live spin Afrobeat, [illegible], [illegible] & dancehall, Luka's Taproom & Lounge, 10 pm, $10

DJ Add1 spinning [illegible], Kingman's Lucky Lounge, 9 pm, free

DJ Jerry Ross spinning soul, funk, hip-hop, R&B & more, Eddy Lounge, 10 pm, free

DJ Trick spinning lounge, Luz Madrone Lounge, 9 pm-2 am, free

Electric Mondo Pop [illegible] w/ [illegible] spin reggae, [illegible], & more, Fifty's, 10 pm, free

Phonodelics [illegible], Kingman's Ivy Anchor, 9 pm, free

Pint Thursdays student night w/ DJ [illegible] spinning [illegible], electro, hip-hop, & top 40, [illegible], 10 pm, [illegible]

& Love Thursdays w/ DJs Mind Motion, Spike One, & guests, Ashkenaz Bar & Grill, 10 pm, free

Over the Edge w/ live spinning power pop, punk, & glam, Ruby before 10 pm-2 am, free

Monica's Group w/ DJs Dulley & Mr. Ryha spinning [illegible] oldies and reggae, [illegible] Lounge, 10 pm, free

Bill Raft indie pop, mash-ups, new wave, Rudy's, 10 pm-2 am, free

Selector Uprise w/ DJ FiTch spinning dub, dub-step, & bass-driven grooves, Jupiter, 9 pm, free

Souvenir Society w/ DJs East, Mr. & Pierce, before Oaktown, 9 pm, $8

Truly house night w/ DJ Mr. Mission spinning hip-hop & R&B, [illegible] & live, 9 pm, $12

Thursday Throwdown w/ DJ Rob the Vinyl Archaeologist, live guests spinning hip-hop, [illegible] '80s, [illegible], house, electro, funk, & soul, Taproom [illegible] Low, 9 pm, free

Unity w/ DJs, live breakbeats, & art, Air Inn & Lounge, 5:30 pm, free before 7 p.m., $8

SAN FRANCISCO

1984 DJs Damon, Jukes, Dangerous Dan, & Melting Girl spin '80s & new wave, Cat Club, 9 pm, free before 9:30 p.m., $6

Afrolicious w/ DJs Sabo, Pleasuremaker, Senor Oz, & guests spinning Afro-tropical-funk, Elbo Room, 10 pm, $6

Compression w/ resident live 2Deep, MAL, [illegible], Shiny, Colonel MC, & house Angel, plus guests, spinning drum 'n' bass, Temple Nightclub, 10 pm, $5-$10

Feels Like This w/ rotating live spinning underground music in the Catacombs, Temple, 10 pm, free

Junk DJs spinning funk, punk, ska, Weed [illegible], hip-hop, electro, vintage swing, & more, Slide live, 10 pm, free before 10:30 p.m., $5

Mezzagrov w/ [illegible], Jason Pra, & Mener spinning [illegible] hits, dancehall, & urban soul, & live Nica, Hugo, & Rigo spinning soulful Latin rhythms, Rosie Lounge, 10 pm, free before 10:30 p.m.

$10 thereafter

Night Beats live Shane King & Swayne spin lovely tunes, [illegible], & electro, Madrone Lounge, 9 pm, free

Remix rotating DJs, The Cricket, 10 pm, $10

Providence Thursdays [illegible] party w/ DJ [illegible] spinning R&B, live, Levende Lounge, 9 pm-2 am, free

RIP: A Remix Manifesto [illegible] screening, plus Eclectic Method, Adrian & [illegible], Mezzanine, 7:30 pm, $12-$17

Stompdown: Undead Wedding Night w/ DJs Tamal Dublin & [illegible] spinning dark electro, industrial, new wave, & dub, Wedding ceremonies & certificates for all who want to be joined in unholy matrimony, Underground SF, 9 pm, $5, free if you wear formal attire or zombie makeup

Tappa Top Thursdays w/ Jah Warrior Roots, MaFi, [illegible], Irie Dole, & I-Wer spinning reggae, Club Six, 9 pm-2 am, $5, free before 10 p.m. w/ RSVP

FRIDAY 24

EAST BAY

Diamond Fridays w/ rotating DJs spinning R&B neo-soul, & Rob 'Rhythm' Anderson live & Grill, 10 pm, $10, before 11 pm, $5

Latin Explosion DJ Jorge Felipe spins cumbia, dance merengue, bolero, Spanish pop, & Ranes before & flac, 9 pm-2 am, $12

Mighty Irie DJs Rocksteady, Mo Dole, & Stealth One spin reggae, dancehall, & hip-hop, Luka's Taproom & Lounge, 10 pm, $15

Nefoon Taproom Lounge DJ Jono Ruiz spinning Cuban music & Latin jazz, La Taza de Café, 10:30 pm, free

Quixotic DJ Joe Ruiz spins funk, Latin & dub, Easy Lounge, 10 pm, free

Retro-Grams Flores [illegible] '80s pop night, Kingman's Lucky Lounge, 9 pm, free

Duley Fridays DJ Lorn & Fat Rob spin R&B & soul, Amoeba's Carnival, 9 pm, $8

SAN FRANCISCO

Dirtybird Summer featuring Boots Martin, Franky, Christian Martin, Worthy, [illegible] Tortfiesta & J Philip, Mezzanine, 10 pm, $10-$15

Foundation w/ Sinkademon, Mighty, 10 pm, $13

The Hue Deal w/ DJ [illegible] The Independent, 9 pm, $13

SATURDAY 25

EAST BAY

Ab Productions & Houstyle live spinning R&B & hip-hop, Forms, 10 pm, free

The Dance Yard hosted by Sean Kennedy Mauco Music, 2 pm, free

Inform a New Wave DJ Tragic spins before [illegible], Conga Lounge, 11 pm, free

Shub Moments DJs Jerry Ross & Soul Professor spin R&B, soul, funk, reggae & hip-hop, Maxwell's Lounge, 9 pm, $10

Innercity Saturdays w/ Action Roots spinning reggae, dancehall, & hip-hop, The Avenue, 9 pm, free

DJ Joe Quiet before 10 pm-2 am, free

Freaky-Deaky DJ Mode and guests spin hip-hop, R&B, mash-ups, and more, College Lane, 9 pm, free

Hot Night w/ DJ Bonnie Marlin, White Horse Inn, 9 pm, $5

La Gran Luca Latino cowboy night w/ DJs spinning salsa, norteño, & bolero, plus hot go-go sequence, Tomás & free & pm, $12

Last Saturdays hosted by Bobby V Godfrey's Inner Circle, 9 pm, $5

Le Haut dance party w/ Blindness & Joy Stone, plus a live performance by Persephone's Bees, Uptown, 9 pm, $5

Magic With Theron DJ Wood & guests host game-surfing extravaganza, Kingman's Lucky Lounge, 9 pm, free

Pop History 101 DJs duo, pop live from the Stooges to Michael Jackson, Ruby Room, 10 pm, free

Reggae Gone w/ DJs Daddy Rule, Mondojo, Pato Mequan, & guests, Radiolation City, 10 pm, $15

SAY IT LOUD w/ DJs Mr. Rare & Spair, Easy Lounge, 10 pm, free

Undead!! Undead Faders, Fingerbangers, & dead-ish spin classic party moves & future funk, Luka's Taproom & Lounge, 9 pm, $10

Total Wired Funk w/ Diamond & Ranne spinning hip-hop, metal, punk, hardcore, & more, Mercury Lounge, 10 pm, free

Warm-Up w/ DJ Kurt live spinning hip-hop R&B, Mercury Lounge, 4:30 pm, free

"Yes, Yes, Y'all" w/ DJs Rootz Arles, Norway Pestbal, & Nevlow, Taproom dance lane, 9 pm, $10

SAN FRANCISCO

AnnaFunkHan featuring Mr. E, JayCeeBo, B-Cause, [illegible], & A-Ron, Elbo before 10 pm, $5

Body Rock DJs Boogie Brown, Calois, & Morgan, plus guests, spin hip-hop, dancehall, & soul, Duplex, 10 pm, $5

El Superritmo! w/ live El Kool Kyle & Roger Más spinning cumbia, reggaeton, dance dancehall, and Roots dance-pop, [illegible] Bar, 10 pm, $6

Lounge women's dance party featuring live Eddy La Noche & guests spinning hip-hop, dancehall, salsa, dancehall, & more, El Rio, 3-8 pm, free

Mood Rock DJs Lewis & Sam Lounge spin Sky Priest beats, Slide live, 10 pm, free before 11:30 p.m., $5

Rebel Girl w/ DJ China G & guests spinning electro, indie dirt, hip-hop, & '80s, Rickshaw Stop, 10 pm, $7

Seduction w/ live spinning hip-hop and R&B hits, The Cellar, 9 pm, free before 10 p.m., $10 after

Stimulus DJs house Ephrom Gibel & Rob Rhythm spin deep soul before Add, 10 pm, $10, free before 11 p.m.

Tabu Lounge live spinning dancehall hip-hop, what's hot 40, & lately before Blue Kai, 10 pm, $20

SUNDAY 26

SAN FRANCISCO

Rob Mission w/ DJ Sep, Maneesh the Twister, & guests spinning dub, roots, & dancehall, Elbo Room, 9 pm, $5

MONDAY 27

SAN FRANCISCO

Soul Cap movie night and contest featuring DJ Jonathan Toubin, Elbo Room, 9 pm, $6

TUESDAY 28

EAST BAY

DJ Ebola-dorm Kingman's Lucky Lounge, 9 pm, free

WEDNESDAY 29

EAST BAY

Remix Pop Inform w/ live Rodigan, Joyo Grip, & Drew spinning electro and house, Radiolation, 9 pm, $5

Mission Wednesdays DJ Santero & Timothy guests mix salsa, samba, dancehall, reggaeton, & hip-hop, Luka's Taproom & Lounge, 9 pm, free

SAN FRANCISCO

Mission to Drury DJ set, The Independent, 9 pm, $15

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This Week's Featured Beers

SAVAGE LOVE

DOUCHE DRIZZLERS

Plus douchebags, repressed Christians, and oppressive moms.

By Dan Savage

I'm a straight guy and my first girl was very experienced — she was proud to say she'd been with at least thirty guys before me. When all was said and done, she said that I was the most well-endowed of any man she'd seen before.

In all my subsequent experiences, the women I've been with have noted that I am a well-equipped dude, though none of them expected it. A couple of times this fact has come up in conversation (that first lady made a point of passing this news on to friends) and most people's reaction is to say that I'm just so unassuming that they wouldn't expect that from me. It's true: I'm rather shy. When it comes to women, I am the complete opposite of cocky.

So here's my question: Should I be advertising my "gift"? Am I supposed to be sharing my size with the world with the hopes that it pays off? Can it help me with the opposite sex to be sharing this fact early, or am I better off just letting the surprise kick in once it's time to get naked?

Huge Hugh

It's better to be a nice, unassuming guy with a surprise in his briefs than it is to be another douchebag always going on about his cock, HH. And it doesn't sound like you really need to talk up your cock. At least one of the women you've slept with is doing that for you. Good word of mouth is the best advertising, HH, so chill.

I just got off the phone after another long-distance fight — I mean discussion — with my mother regarding her godson, my cousin "A." I am SURE (and my brother and father agree) that A is gay, like his dad (long story). He talks incessantly about finding A Nice Christian Girl and Settling Down (although he doesn't even date). It makes me want to vomit. Unfortunately, A has absorbed his mother's reactionary religious dogma. I say he should get some therapy and try to have a happy and fulfilled life as the person he really is. My mother says he is "asexual." I say he was scarred by his childhood (his father left his mother for a man and later died of AIDS). This argument has been going on for a decade.

I'm not close enough to anyone in my extended family to feel comfortable bringing this up with my cousin directly or with any of his immediate relatives, but I feel miserable watching from afar and seeing A waste his potential for happiness. What I want is for my mother to talk to him — she and A are very close — but she is convinced that he is "just not interested" in sex.

Can you think of any loving way to resolve this?

Wishes There Could Be An Intervention

Want an intervention? Stage one yourself. Intervene already and stop trying to make your mother do it. If you're not close to your cousin or your extended family, WTCBAI, then you have nothing to lose. Confront your cousin, make a scene, save a life.

I am a 21-year-old bisexual female. I've never really been close with my mom, and since I moved away from home three years ago it's gotten worse. I know that she loves me, but I don't think she likes the young adult I'm growing into. Yet she wants me to visit her and stay at her house for weeks when I have time off from college so she can talk me out of liking anything she hates. When I'm with my friends, I'm quite witty and outgoing, particularly about sex. But when I stay with her, my personality becomes crippled and stunted by her authority. Last year I stupidly told her that I like watching porn; now it's something that she's always bringing up. For example, I got into a conversation with her about a recent breakup and asked her if all men were like my cheating ex. She told me that she thought his cheating was my fault — because I watch porn, she said. I must have been sending out subliminal messages that I approve of women being sexually exploited.

She raised me to be a feminist, but I can't bring myself to ask her if she would kick up this much of a fuss if I were a 21-year-old man who watched porn. I don't know what to do to make her happy, short of having some sort of aversion therapy. I feel really conflicted. Away from my mother, I feel like a confident, empowered young woman in my social life and my sex life; when I'm with her, I feel like this mute, angry, introverted little victim.

I know exactly what I'd do if this were a relationship, but how should I resolve a difficult mother/daughter relationship?

Can I Dump My Mother?

If hanging out with your mother makes you miserable, CIDMM, don't hang out with your fucking mother. You're a 21-year-old adult — not a young adult, not someone "growing into" adulthood, but an adult already — and you're in no way obligated to spend all of your free time under your mother's roof. Head off with your friends over college breaks: travel, watch porn. (Or better yet: Make some porn — see thestranger.com/hump for details!) Head home for the holidays if you must. And since your mother is inclined to use the details of your personal life that you share with her against you, don't tell her anything. Visit with your mother when you're home; don't let her depose you.

Help me figure this one out: Why are men such douche-drizzling assholes?

Wish I Ate Pussy Instead

The only reason you think men are assholes — douche-drizzlers at that — is because you fuck men, WIAPI, and so it's men who have hurt your feelings and fucked you over. If you ate pussy, you'd be fucking women and women would be stomping on your heart and you'd quickly come to hate women. And if you were a straight man, you'd be complaining about women, and if you were a fag, you'd be complaining about men, and if you were bisexual, you'd be complaining about everyone.

So try to have some perspective and cut men some slack and hang in there, okay? They drizzle douche, for sure. But so do you — so do we all. ■

Find the *Savage Lovecast* (my weekly podcast) every Tuesday at thestranger.com/savage. mail@savagelove.net

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The following individual is doing business as **Octaff Design & Technology**: Street Address: 1027 9th St. Berkeley CA 94710. Mailing Address: P.O. Box [illegible] Albany CA 94706 is hereby registered by the following owner: Eugene [illegible] 558 Hillcrest Road, San Carlos, CA 94070. This Fictitious conducted by an individual. The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. This Statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Alameda County on 6/1[illegible]2009.
Octaff Design & Technology
7/1,7/8, 7/15, 7/22/2009

[illegible] proposing [illegible] cellular tower [illegible] Berkeley [illegible] Parties with any interest [illegible] Historic Preservation [illegible] comments should be sent to [illegible] at 2635 Corporate Drive in Canonsburg, PA 15317 or by calling 724-416-2080 during normal business hours. Comments must be received by August [illegible] 2009

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Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 426629
The following individual is doing business as **The Third Boot Store**: Street Address, 2608 San Jose Ave., Alameda, CA 94501. Mailing Address: Same as above, is hereby registered by the following owner: Albert [illegible] 2608 San Jose Ave., Alameda, CA 94501. This Business conducted by an Individual. The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 11/10/08. This Statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Alameda County on 6/25/2009.
The Third Boot Store
7/1,7/8, 7/15, 7/22/2009

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: RG09461064
Alameda [illegible] Superior Court [illegible] Courthouse [illegible] Oakland CA [illegible] In the matter of [illegible] Petitioner [illegible] a petition with this court for a decree changing name as follows: Present name: [illegible] Proposed Name: [illegible] THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. NOTICE OF HEARING: October 16, 2009 at 11:00 A.M. Dept. # 31, at U.S. Post Office Building, 201 13th Street, Oakland CA 94612. A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once a week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation printed in this county: East Bay Express, Alameda County. Dated: July 6, 2009. Signed: Yolanda [illegible] Judge of the Superior Court
7/15, 7/22, 7/29, 8/5/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 426031
The following individual is doing business as **[illegible]**, Street Address: [illegible] Ashby Ave., Berkeley CA 94710. Mailing Address: Same as above, is hereby registered by the following owner: [illegible] Delights, Inc. 3017 Ashby Ave., Berkeley CA 94705. This Business conducted by a Corporation. The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 11/10/08. This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/25/2009.
[illegible]
7/1,7/8, 7/15, 7/22/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement File #425480-89
The following individual is doing business as **West Coast Women's Regional Book Tour & MCWRT**, Street Address: [illegible] St. [illegible] Mailing Address: Same as above, is hereby registered by the following owner: [illegible] Berkeley CA [illegible] This business is conducted by an unincorporated association other than a partnership. The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on [illegible]. This Statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Alameda County on [illegible] 2009
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7/1, 7/8, 7/15, 7/22/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # [illegible]
The following individual is doing business as **Fashions Plus**, Street Address: 2230 Mariner Square Drive, Alameda, CA 94501. Mailing Address: Same as above, is hereby registered by the following owner: [illegible] Hamilton [illegible] Unit C, Alameda, CA 94501. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 6/25/09. This Statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Alameda County on 6/25/2009.
Fashions Plus
7/1,7/8, 7/15, 7/22/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 426700
The following individual is doing business as **Little Stars Preschool**, Street Address: [illegible] St., Berkeley CA 94703. Mailing Address: P.O. Box 9753 Berkeley CA 94709 is hereby registered by the following owners: [illegible] This business is conducted by a General partnership. The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A. The Statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Alameda County on 6/24/2009.
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Color: Black with white
Sex: Female, spayed
Age: [illegible]
Description: [illegible]
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510-845-7735
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Audrey
Breed: Domestic Short Hair
Color: White with [illegible]
Sex: Female, spayed
Age: 7 years old
Description: [illegible]
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Angel
Age: 7y 11m 1wk, Female
Breed: Domestic Short Hair
Color: gray and white
Weight: 11.4375 lbs.
Description: [illegible]
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8323 Baldwin St., Oakland
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Buggy
Breed: Domestic short hair
Color: Brown tabby with white
Sex: Male, neutered
Age: [illegible]
Description: [illegible]
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Jasmine
Age: [illegible] Sex: Female
Breed: Domestic Short Hair
Description: [illegible]
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Glitter Girl
Breed: American Pit Bull mix
Color: Black and White
Sex: Female, spayed
Age: 3 year [illegible]
Description: [illegible]
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Kayla
Age: [illegible] Sex: Female
Breed: American Pit Bull
Description: [illegible]
East Bay SPCA
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Sox
Age: [illegible] Sex: Female
Breed: Domestic Short Hair
Description: [illegible]
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Helena
Age: [illegible] Sex: Female
Breed: Domestic Medium Hair
Description: [illegible]
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Little Spot Runs
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Big Red
Age: [illegible] Sex: Male
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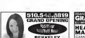
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